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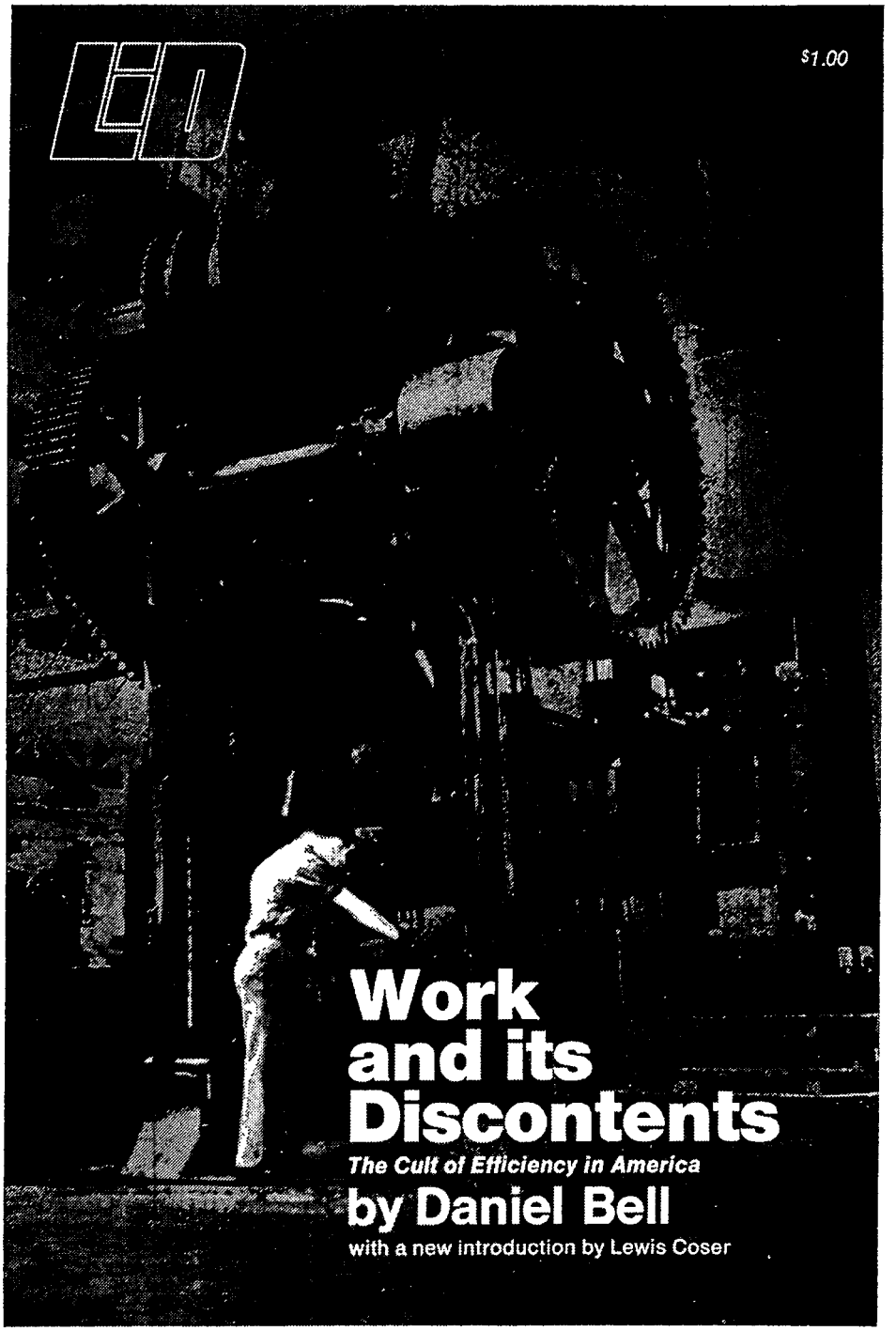

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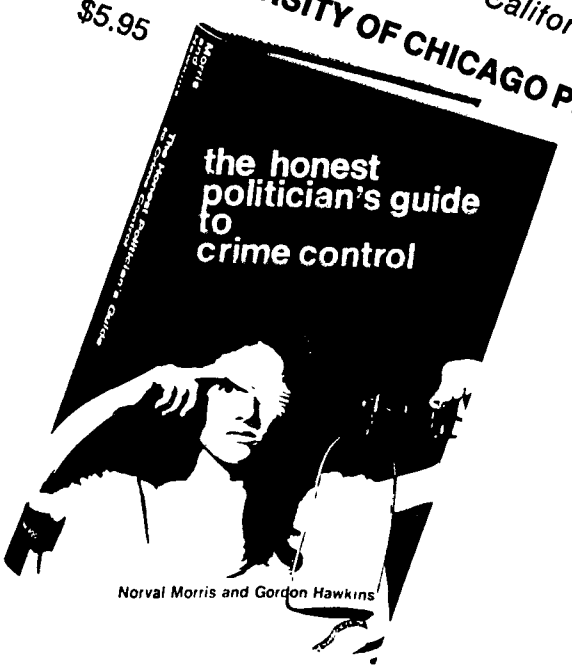

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WALTER REUTHER

September 1, 1907–May 9, 1970

"Seven times they raised me off the concrete and threw me down on it. They pinned my arms and shot short jabs to my face. I was punched and dragged by my feet to the stairway. I grabbed the railing and they wrenched me loose. I was thrown down the first flight of iron steps. Then they kicked me down the other flight of steps until I found myself on the ground where I was beaten and kicked."—*Walter Reuther describing to an NLRB hearing his encounter with Ford goons during the "battle of the overpass" near River Rouge, May 1937; quoted from* Toil and Trouble, *by Thomas R. Brooks.*

THE INCREDIBLE WEEK in May 1970 that opened with the murder of four students at Kent State and closed with the death of Walter Reuther, his wife and four companions, in a plane crash on the night of May 9, will be with us for a long time. We have already witnessed some of the repercussions to the National Guards' cowardly lunacy in Ohio. Mourning the deaths of the students—followed by others in Augusta and Jackson—we can sense how much these horrible events have shaken the country, and how much more it needs to be shaken.

Mourning Reuther, we can hardly attempt to assess the impact of the death of this remarkable labor leader. The UAW is itself a remarkable union, created by courageous men and women in struggle with industrial giants. Its leadership is uncommonly able, and Leonard Woodcock, who has been named by the union's executive board to succeed Reuther, is a man of recognized ability. None of the UAW leaders "boast" that they never led a strike. They have all been on the line. Woodcock, going to Georgia to join the SCLC march, does so not because Reuther would have gone there, but because it is the sort of thing one expects—and gets—from the UAW leaders.

Who can say what the consequences of Reuther's death will be on the UAW—and beyond that on the AFL–CIO which he helped create, and from which he withdrew his union not long ago, but in which he clearly remained a considerable influence? If Reuther was far-sighted and creative in his conception of a union's responsibility, the union expected him to be, and approved in successive elections, the most recent only a few weeks ago.

Perhaps the impact on the union itself, in the narrowest sense, will be slight. These men can tackle GM and Ford, as they have all along. Obviously Reuther alone could not have kept black and white working together despite difficult situations, or kept the union in the forefront of imaginative response

(*continued on page* 310)

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DISSENT

JULY–AUGUST 1970

DISSENT is a journal devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy. It seeks to serve as a forum for writers devoted to these ideas and values, while also welcoming a wide variety of other opinions. Each writer speaks for himself; there is no effort made to exact editorial consensus or uniformity.

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to current conditions, and done so with full respect to the best democratic traditions of unionism. The union has done all that and more. But it would be self-deceiving not to recognize that Reuther brought a special quality of leadership.

There haven't been many labor leaders in this century whose names have meant something more than the union posts they occupied. Gene Debs, John L. Lewis. If each of these men was a bogey to business (think back over the hysteria they could generate in corporate board rooms), each was also a man known to working people everywhere, and not in notoriety but in dedication. How many others are known to laboring people in other lands as *American* leaders who could be depended on to think of *them?*

Did he have his faults? Should he have done this, said that? Absurd questions. Everyone is surely a master of hindsight, and no one can escape its judgments. We think, however, that the creation of a union like the UAW, and all that it has signified in American life, will be looked upon as an achievement at once major and lasting. But this is not meant to be a funeral eulogy. It is a tribute to a man who led labor and led it well. We hope to see his like again, soon. —E. G.

There are so many memories

I REMEMBER THE DAY three of us stood on a windy corner in the city—in this city in 1935 and he told us he had found a room that could be rented for $10—$10 a month for a headquarters for the organizing drive on the west side of Detroit.

And between the three of us we didn't have $10. I remember the day I went with him to the home when he asked May to give $2 from their meager household budget to buy a tank of gas for his car so that he could call on some workers and talk to them about a union. And she gave it to him although it was sorely needed for other things.

May was a generous and loving woman—a fitting helpmate who not only understood his aspirations and his goals but who shared them as well. I remember all the years that came after. The strikes and the picket lines, the many rounds of negotiations when we either hit the bricks or waited on the sidelines for him to work his magic at the bargaining table.

I remember the inspired progress helpers, the escalator clause, the too old to work, too young to die slogan, SUB benefits, group insurance, vacation pay and paid holidays and much, much more. It came slowly and painfully but when we put it all together it meant a new life and a new world for the workers in the plants.

—DAVE MILLER, *at Reuther Funeral, Detroit, May 15, 1970*

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Irving Howe

Where Are We Now?

June 10, 1970

THE SITUATION in the United States is too serious for mere indulgence in pessimism. Whoever reads these lines will, I assume, have shared our feelings of anger and intense dismay over the Nixon policy in Cambodia and the killings at Kent State and Jackson. The last thing, however, that our readers need is another outpouring of rhetoric. Let's see, instead, if we can sort out where we are.

Precisely why the Nixon administration decided to invade Cambodia remains a matter for analysis and speculation. My own premise is that such decisions are likely to be made as open-ended policies. Some portions of the administration must have seen the Cambodian policy as the minor protective thrust it was later said to be; others hoped perhaps that it would lead to a major intensification of the war, with that famous chimera of "victory" again hovering into sight. The military argument can't be dismissed entirely, though, having heard so many versions of it in the past, we have every reason for skepticism. As far back as 1968 General Creighton Abrams, U.S. Commander in South Vietnam, is quoted as having "shrugged off the notion of a cross-border mop-up. 'They'll just move back a few miles,' he told newsmen. 'It won't change a thing.' " (*Washington Post,* March 21, 1970.) Still, it would be a mistake to become entangled in the purely military issue, since the point is that by now there are no longer purely military issues.

To the large segment of the American people who reacted so bitterly against Nixon's announcement, the entry into Cambodia signified a political decision—a decision to widen and thereby probably prolong the war, and in doing so, to revert to the apocalyptic rhetoric (an anti-Communist crusade, the U.S. in danger of becoming a second-rate power, *ad nauseum*) one associates with Lyndon Johnson. The response on the campus—elsewhere too—testified to a widespread fear that Nixon was returning to the Dulles-Rusk tradition; that Cambodia signified an intention of maintaining a U.S. involvement in Vietnam, even if on a reduced scale, for the indefinite future.

To many people this seemed too much to bear. They were right.

Why then did Nixon take this step? It seems quite possible that the Pentagon argued it "could not be responsible" for the safety of our reduced forces in Vietnam unless it were allowed to protect its flanks in Cambodia. (No matter that shortly after the invasion, administration sources acknowledged there had recently taken place a partial withdrawal of enemy troops from Cambodia and that this partial withdrawal had prompted thoughts of delivering a blow at the enemy's rear.) It is also possible that Nixon was sold a bill of goods by some brilliant-nutty "strategist" with or without stars on his shoulders, who promised that one more stroke might yet bring "victory." And it seems likely that Nixon was making a political pay-off to both the Pentagon and the Right, as an exchange for the announced withdrawal of troops.

There are other, more serious reasons. Reports from Vietnam have indicated that "Vietnamization" is proving to be a limited success. The troops of Thieu are not yet ready, the effort to "pacify" regions of South Vietnam has been spotty, and unless withdrawal of troops (so runs the argument) is not to be followed by a military disaster, something must be done now, while the U.S. still has sufficient striking force in Vietnam. There is also the probability that the President's decision came as part of an international game of maneuver *vis à vis* the Soviet Union and Communist China. Partly as

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the result of shake-ups in its leadership, said to have strengthened the "hard-line" wing led by Brezhnev; partly to distract attention from its chronic economic crisis; and partly out of the hope it could capitalize on American difficulties, the Russian government has begun to pursue a rather tough international policy, most notably in the Mediterranean and through its placement of pilots in Egypt. Even if, as we suppose, the long-run trend continues toward a detente between the two major antagonists in the Cold War, this does not rule out intervals of severe conflict. We now are living through such an interval.

The internal political struggle in Cambodia must also have prompted Nixon to act. Whether Prince Sihanouk was overthrown with the connivance of the CIA we don't yet know; but once he was overthrown, the precarious internal balance in Cambodia was destroyed and a civil war of sorts rendered likely. It would now seem that the apparent advantage created by Sihanouk's fall promptly turned into a disadvantage, since the regime of generals that took over was clearly inept and without a popular base. The vacuum that now threatened to develop in Cambodia must have struck the Nixon administration as a threat to its plan for consolidating the power of the Saigon regime. Hence, the invasion.

The main significance of this venture, I would speculate, is surely as a further sign of long-range U.S. policy. Troops will continue to be withdrawn, but there will be no political agreement with Hanoi or the Vietcong unless they accept the American formula for a Vietnam future—an acceptance highly unlikely. The U.S. policy will therefore be to continue propping up the Thieu government, or some equivalent, in the hope that it can maintain control over significant portions of South Vietnam even as American troops are thinned out. Two seemingly contradictory ends are thereby sought: there will be no yielding to proposals for a "neutralist" or coalition government in South Vietnam (right now, probably the only realistic condition for peace), yet American military involvement and its consequent casualties will lessen. Seen in this perspective, the Cambodian invasion presumably strengthens the military hand of the Saigon regime.

The weaknesses and probable failures awaiting this policy, both in Vietnam and the U.S., are obvious. There is little evidence that the Saigon regime can make it on its own, though there is plenty of evidence that growing segments of the American people will refuse to support an indefinite military presence in Vietnam. All of which makes one skeptical about Nixon's promise to withdraw our troops from Cambodia. More precisely, skeptical about the kind of withdrawal. Ground troops will probably be withdrawn, while the U.S. provides air cover for South Vietnamese troops in Cambodia. And only one result can follow: prolonging the war and intensifying the crisis in the United States. Which probably will not prevent Nixon from announcing this summer that the Cambodian "incursion" was a great success.

II

THE RESPONSE AT HOME exceeded anything Nixon had foreseen. (How strange that the most powerful man in the country doesn't know what is happening within it. How bizarre that in going to meet student protesters in Washington, he should imagine that the way to reach them is to talk about football. Question: where does this man live? Answer: in the White House.) What we have been witnessing these past weeks is a display of the strengths and weaknesses of democratic politics.

(1) *The party system is in bad shape.*

Here, you might have thought, was a brilliant opportunity for the Democrats. A few prominent figures in the party attacked the Cambodian policy, but what the Democrats showed mainly was their lassitude and malaise. They could not mount a major offensive against Nixon, they could not seize the opportunity he had given them, they could not unify the scattered forces of opposition. The wounds of 1968 are still unhealed, and there is no clear perspective as to which issues should be stressed in November, or which segments of the population to turn toward. The labor-liberal-black-intellectual alliance which had been a major sustaining force behind the Democratic party is largely shattered. It isn't going to be quickly put together again, and in its traditional form, perhaps never again.

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(2) *A crisis of government is developing.*

By contrast to the Democratic party, the Senate as an institution has begun to react. It does so partly on political grounds, but also out of a sense of national responsibility, a feeling that the country is coming apart and some sort of "bipartisan" effort is needed to reestablish national unity. More immediately, there is strong irritation at seeing the Nixon administration whittle away the traditional privileges and powers of the Senate. (Before launching the Cambodian advance, Nixon consulted secretly with leaders of military and right-wing organizations—but not with the Senate!) People on the Left have usually ignored such factors as the rivalries among branches of the government; the tradition of putting everything in "one bag" is older than the phrase itself; and it's a pity. The clash between Senate and executive branch isn't likely to be decisive in its own right, but it can certainly count for a good deal if meanwhile there is a larger, more democratically-rooted political struggle against the war.

(3) *The Nixon administration faces greater division within its ranks than it expected.*

The fissures among the Republicans are partly hidden, if only because they are in power, but those fissures run at least as deep as the ones within the Democratic party. And since Nixon isn't nearly as forceful a leader as was Johnson, there's less likelihood he will succeed in controlling the divergent tendencies within his administration. Almost half of his cabinet opposes at least the more extreme version of the "Southern strategy," a scheme devised by Kevan Phillips and John Mitchell to appeal to the baser instincts of the American people; some do so out of genuine revulsion, others out of a notion that cynicism doesn't always prove expedient. There is, furthermore, a growing split between the kind of hard-shell, repressive Republicanism represented by the Attorney General and the kind represented by, say, John Gardner and within the cabinet by Robert Finch. The latter tendency understands the severity of the national crisis and believes that repression plus "the Southern strategy," even if it wins the next election, may tear the country apart. Close to the "Eastern Establishment," these people are committed to a policy not so much of active liberalism as of national reconciliation. They control powerful institutions and are likely to be heard from.

(4) *The American trade unions can no longer be assumed to function as an automatic and monolithic bloc in support of the war.*

Though George Meany quickly announced his support for the Cambodian invasion, there are increasing signs that opposition to Vietnam is growing within the unions. The UAW issued a fine statement denouncing the invasion (see p. 320) and is lining up with the doves. With a million and a half members, the UAW can't be dismissed as a stray local dominated by a few old-time leftists; it speaks for a significant segment of the American working class. (It was touching to see its new president, Leonard Woodcock, admit in public that on the war his daughters had been right and he wrong; that sort of honesty could do a lot to "bring us together"—"us" meaning the progressive unionists, the democratic leftist intellectuals, the dissident students seeking to work through the electoral system.) Shortly after the UAW took its stand, Jacob Potofsky, head of the 400,000-member Amalgamated Clothing Workers, also attacked the war.

In California 450 union officers issued a statement entitled, "We've had it!" in which they attacked the Cambodian policy. Apart from names that might have been expected, there were among the signatories officials of the ironworkers, carpenters, boilermakers, painters, butchers, and lithographers unions. Einar Mohn, head of the Western Conference of Teamsters, and Richard Groulx, secretary of the Alameda Labor Council, signed the statement. These men aren't exactly radicals, and the fact that they felt obliged to come out against the war means something.

A peace movement devoted to appealing to millions of ordinary Americans, some of them middle-class people and others blue-collar workers, might now, for the first time, find significant support in the unions. Nothing could be more important.

(5) *As the trend toward "polarization" continues, the forces of backlash gain in boldness and coherence.*

About such forces within the government,

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personified by Agnew and Mitchell, nothing need be said here, since it is obvious to everyone. About those outside the government, represented most troublingly by the New York construction workers, something very much needs to be said.

The violence practiced by the hard-hats against peaceniks in the Wall Street area is a hooliganism no more excusable than the violence sometimes practiced by students. What the construction workers did was bad enough. Still worse was the support they found from portions of their union leadership, always the most conservative in the country. Quite disgraceful was the failure of almost all the major New York union leaders to speak out strongly on this matter, especially since some of them had been rather eloquent in attacking hooliganism . . . on the campus. For our part there can be neither ambiguity nor silence: the methods used by the construction workers against students fill us with shame and revulsion.

But it will not do to stop here, for the problem is too complicated to allow merely for a statement of repugnance. We have been crying out in DISSENT these past few years about the dangers of backlash; and one response of the more feckless segments of the New Left has been to say that such outcries are mere social democratic devices for blunting the militancy of student protest.

Well, now we can see. The truth is that large portions of the blue-collar workers, as well as of the middle classes, are full of hostility toward "the students." Unfortunately (and much of what happens on the campus encourages this) these people don't distinguish clearly between the mass of students troubled by the war and the rampaging minority of "guerrilla fighters." My guess is that a good number of these blue-collar workers are not deeply committed to the Vietnam war; they would as soon have it end quickly; but many of their deepest sentiments, as Americans and plebeians, are outraged by current cultural-political fashions. They are angered by the desecration of the flag; they are annoyed by "hippie" styles; they are outraged (no matter with what hypocrisy) by girls using foul speech; they are galled by what seem to them the indulgences of "those rich kids" in the colleges.

From all this one political lesson stands out: any politics, whether in the name of peace or social change, which dismisses both the legitimate complaints and confused, wrought-up sentiments of these people is a politics of suicide, a politics playing directly into the hands of reaction. Our reiterated opposition to merging opposition to the Vietnam war with "the cultural revolution" is being vindicated all too well. That is why carrying Viet Cong flags at demonstrations has done so much damage to the peace movement. That is why it is plain stupid to allow the problem of the war to be deflected by ritualistic sentiments about the flag. And on these matters the New Left bears a heavy responsibility.

(6) *The academic community has become an important, perhaps even a major, force in American politics, as shown by its ability to pressure the Nixon administration into a partial retreat on Cambodia—though how well it will now use its influence we cannot yet know.*

What had previously been mere hyperbole, that is, the claim that a whole generation was in revolt against the war, now begins to approach reality. Anyone teaching at an American university can testify to the breadth and depth of student response, as well as to the fact that the wave of indignation after the Cambodian adventure swept along, or aside, the relatively small and fragmented New Left student groups.

Despite an excess here and a foolishness there, the first response on the campus was constructive: an all-but-spontaneous decision to enter electoral politics in a massive way, and meanwhile an effort to pressure Congress. The students grasped the fact that all the rhetoric against "working within the system" was mostly nonsense. They understood that if they were not to be deflected into violent adventures, they had no choice but to throw themselves into electoral politics. Good; and if carried through in an intelligent and sustained way, it could lead to great positive consequences.

In a curious way, the response of the students paralleled that of Secretary of the

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Interior Hickel. Almost intuitively, both realized that when a vacuum is created in the political center, the force that can fill it is likely to be the force that wins. Both realized that, mainly though not only because of the Cambodian invasion, the Nixon administration had moved so far to the Right, there was an opportunity to chip away its support. Hickel, for his part, saw the need for trying to maintain influence with the troubled center of American politics; he wanted to push Nixon back toward the moderate heartland of American society. The aroused students similarly understand that their one chance of pressuring large-scale changes was to plunge into that electoral politics which only yesterday a few of them, mostly New Leftists but also disheartened liberals, had begun to sneer at.[1]

Cautions are in order. Student politics has almost always shown itself short-breathed. It has almost always been intense but lacking in persistence, and doomed to disintegration when unable to relate to a larger movement within the society itself. *Student politics tends to be effective insofar as it ceases to be exclusively student politics and finds allies within the society.* To do this it must undergo a frequently-painful process of self-transformation.

One possible danger is that the student entry onto the political arena may be marked by a kind of moralistic sectarianism: will candidates who have been against the war now be found to have been "not enough" against the war, or against it in "the wrong way?" will student support for dove candidates also depend on the stand they take on other issues, e.g., the trials of the Panthers? will the students have sufficient flexibility to see that, especially in states like Ohio, the victory of their cause depends on a readiness to work together with trade unionists who may not agree with them down the line on Vietnam but are nevertheless ready to support liberal-dovish candidates? and will the students understand that electoral victory probably depends on stressing more than the single issue of the war?

There is a great deal of sense in the remarks of Elizabeth and Eugene Genovese:

> If the anti-war movement can be contained on the campuses, it can be killed on the campuses. If it can be turned into acts of violent frustration of a kind likely to be feared, resented and certainly misunderstood by the working class and middle class, then Nixon will surely weather the storm. . . . No amount of seized buildings could match the effect of thousands of students and professors going door to door to talk to workers and middle-class Americans. (*New York Review,* June 4, 1970)

Right. But what matters is not only talking to workers and middle-class Americans; what matters is how one talks to them and what one says. There is still—to put it mildly—a lot to learn on this score. There is a lot to learn about

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[1] Under the circumstances we needn't take too literally those students who say they are giving the electoral system "one last chance." Except as a possible forerunner of demoralization, this phrase means little. For suppose we lose in November: does that mean giving up the attempt to persuade and influence the American people? It is absurd to suppose that defeat in an election lends political plausibility or moral sanction to tactics of violence or strategies of "revolution." And it would be desirable for everyone to remember Paul O'Dwyer's words: "Destroying other people's property and violence are self-defeating and counterproductive. What violence would lead to is a six-day bloodbath with the liberals and intellectuals in jail or on the run, and then you'd have the right-wing takeover." (*New York Times,* May 23, 1970.)

Another danger we should be honest enough to admit is that the "politicizing" of the university—that is, the taking of political positions by departments, faculties, and universities themselves, as distinct from legitimate political action by individual members of the university—may come back to haunt us. In principle I agree with the views expressed in this issue by Henri Rabasseire, though at my own university I found myself saying, *with some qualms,* that given the national emergency we had to modify our position regarding university autonomy. Nevertheless, we have the greatest obligation to fight against the transformation of the university into a political agency.

WALTER BENJAMIN

Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century

This brilliant essay will appear for the first time in English translation in our September-October issue.

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decency of approach, about the abandonment of that disgusting condescension so many middle-class student radicals display toward the plebeian hordes (a condescension given theoretical dignity in the writings of Herbert Marcuse).

If the upheaval on the campus ends in demoralization, the nihilists of Right and Left, Spiro Agnew and Jerry Rubin, will be the gainers. These two noise-makers, by the way, ought to be shipped off to a desert island and there required to chant slogans and obscenities at one another from daybreak to nightfall.[2] And it is just because the possibility of future campus "polarization" raises the threat of such serious consequences, both for the campus and the society at large, that someone ought to say that when William Kunstler visits campuses and stirs people into the kind of rage where violence comes to seem proper, he is doing the work of John Mitchell.

[2] The sum of Rubin's wisdom consists of a passionate belief in the value of burning Yale Law School to the ground. How blessedly simple life is for fools.

III

THERE ARE, AGAIN, real possibilities in the coming elections. But win, lose, or draw, we must insist upon a long-range perspective. We have no sympathy, nor patience, with those academic ranters who are peddling five-and-dime apocalypse these days. We have no sympathy, nor patience, with those who, unaware of the consequences to themselves and overcome with the toxins of *Schadenfreude,* gleefully predict the downfall of the Republic.

Yes, the situation is grave; the policy of the government detestable; the struggle severe.

All the more reason to dig in and work hard, to speak patiently and with respect to those who do not see things quite as we do. To keep one's head is not to close one's heart. Precisely because it is a difficult moment, we should insist all the more on the basic values of the democratic Left: radical changes with liberal norms, nonviolence, the defense and extension of democratic institutions. Within the wide boundaries of these opinions, all sorts of disagreements are possible on current political tactics. But about these values themselves: no compromise, not an inch!

Getting Democracy into General Motors

June 10, 1970

BACK IN THE THIRTIES a small group of Marxists tried, unsuccessfully, to raise the slogan, "Open the Books!" as a way of compelling American giant corporations to disclose the true state of their financial dealings and holdings. It was done in the hope that the unions, in their negotiations with industry, would pick up this idea and that it would become part of a growing worker's militancy.

Now, some decades later a parallel idea is taking hold. It is the widening drive, spearheaded by students and the United Auto Workers Union, to get the major corporations to adopt more socially responsible and responsive positions on questions such as pollution and the hiring of minorities. Its clearest manifestation to date has been Ralph Nader's "Campaign for Corporate Responsibility" directed against General Motors' management, with the goal of getting support for a series of proposals: three consumers' representatives to be added to General Motors' board of directors; a series of resolutions pertaining to GM irresponsibility in the area of pollution, auto safety, employee safety, and racial discrimination in the handing-out of franchises; a permanent watchdog committee— to be formed by UAW representatives, civil-rights and religious groups, etc.—that will report on GM fulfillment of these proposals.

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THE NADER PROPOSALS' defeat at the last GM stockholders' meeting does not take away from the significance of this new movement. General Motors, the world's greatest industrial concern (700,000 U.S. and foreign employees; 1.3 million stockholders, and an enormous percentage of the stock university-owned; a concern with five times the annual income of the population of Rhode Island), will have to reckon with this movement from now on.

It is estimated that 29 million GM shares are in the hands of institutions, including universities. Harvard University alone holds 287,000 shares of GM stock, and in recent months there was a great deal of discussion on the Harvard campus, much of it initiated by the action of the local branch of the Young Peoples Socialist League, concerning the need for Harvard to vote its shares in behalf of the Nader proposals.

The action is constructive, and it ought to be broadened and deepened. The American people, increasingly aware of the environmental crisis and unhappy over the plainly obstructionist attitude of the business world (where is that fumeless auto engine?), may be ripe for a new approach to corporate gigantism. The antitrust laws are all but abandoned, a failure. New studies analyzing American capitalism (e.g., Richard Barber's *The American Corporation*) indicate that we are going through the greatest corporation merger movement in our history—50 of the corporations listed among the 500 largest by *Fortune* magazine in 1962 have since that time been absorbed by other giants, and 30 of these since 1968. Professor Barber concludes that the top 100 American firms now own half of all the nation's manufacturing assets (means of production), while the top 200 corporations own 60 percent (20 years ago the figure was 50 percent).

The issue of social responsibility is clearly joined. Again, the students have an opportunity to link up with other progressive forces in our society: the unions, the consumers and their organizations. This issue has enormous political and social potential, for it raises, even if thus far mildly, a central issue that we socialists have always concentrated upon: the issue of economic and industrial democracy.

—S. P.

Provocation à la FBI

June 3, 1970

LET US INTRODUCE to our readers a fascinating character—Prince Crazy, also known by his more mundane name of George Demmerle. Prince Crazy, tottering into the advanced age of 39, was known as a "character" in New Left, hippie, and East Village circles. Wherever the talk went far and fierce about the need for bombs and burnings, there Prince Crazy stood out for his "revolutionary" boldness. No one could outdo him in his verbal readiness to smite the Establishment with fire and sword. The young people with whom he associated thought him somewhat strange but still . . . everyone, these days, is supposed to do his own thing.

When a group of four people, including Sam Melville and Jane Alpert, was arrested several months ago on charges of bomb-throwing, Prince Crazy, as you might expect, was one of them. Soon, however, it became clear that he was not going to have to rot in jail, like Melville, or flee the country, like Alpert. For he was an FBI agent who, with his loose mouth, had helped entrap desperate people with loose minds. It may have been the prospect of his testimony that led the other defendants to enter a plea of guilty.

• Interviewed in the *New York Post*, May 25, 1970, Prince Crazy described his activities as

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spying—and about the picture he gives of the political circles in which he distinguished himself—one doesn't know whether to cry or to laugh. He gained the confidence of far-left groups, he reports, by the simple expedient of imitating the antics of Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin. (In the old days, an FBI man in the Communist party had at least to pay dues and perform some party chores . . .) And if, in the course of developing revolutionary strategy with the Weathermen and other groups, he picked up a few personal pleasures—well, even a police agent is made of blood and flesh, isn't he?

• But there's one aspect of this sordid story that strikes us as particularly interesting. Last year a group of "crazies" tried to break up a banquet held by the League for Industrial Democracy, and one of the most active figures in this attempt was the Prince. He understood, you see, the necessity for striking a blow at the liberals and social democrats.

Which leads to some interesting questions: How many other acts of violence and disruption, undertaken by far-out elements of the New Left, were in fact provoked by agents of the FBI or the police? When will the more serious people on the New Left learn that if someone starts shouting for bullets and blood he is as likely to be a secret agent as a sincere nut? And might not institutions that have suffered damage from recent riots consider the possibility that they were provoked by police agents?

A damage suit by the Bank of America against the FBI: that would be something to look forward to.

—D. O.

To Our Readers

Some of you have asked why we sometimes fail to comment on an event that occurs during the month an issue of DISSENT *appears, or why a comment we do print is sometimes dated. The answer is this: between the submission to the printer of the last piece of copy for a given issue and its appearance in print there is approximately a month. Given the condition of the mails these days, it may take another week or even two before you see the magazine. As a result our topical comment may be dated.*

We try to write it with an eye toward larger issues, so that it won't depend on a passing event. Sometimes that works, sometimes not. From now on, we will date all items in "Comments and Opinions," so that readers will be reminded of these facts.—ED.

June 3, 1970

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The Murder of the Indians of Brazil

ALREADY FACING THE THREAT of extinction from disease-contacts with whites, the Indians of Brazil have also been the target of deliberate extermination efforts with bacteriological weapons. Brazilian plantation owners, adventurers and government officials are accused of attempting to take over valuable Indian lands by deliberately introducing pathogenic organisms into the Amazon basin tribes.

Smallpox, influenza, tuberculosis and measles, often transmitted by intentionally contaminated gifts, were brought into the Mato Grosso area; lacking immunologic defenses against these diseases, the Indians were often fatally vulnerable to the resulting epidemics. The extermination attempts, a well-kept secret outside Brazil until quite recently, date back at least 13 years. Last winter, Dr. Patrick Braun, Medical Attaché to the French Department of Overseas Territory, told *Medical Tribune* of the mass murder conspiracy. Dr. Braun has examined files of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior, and reviewed a comprehensive 5,115-page investigative report by the Brazilian government.

In a report of the Interior Department, General Albuquerque Lima, former Interior Minister, wrote that "the refinements of this criminal penetration brought bacteriological warfare to the backwoods by means of 'gifts' to the forest inhabitants of clothing, impregnated with . . . microbes . . .; their food was poisoned, their children kidnapped; the forest tribesmen were shamelessly murdered." This spring, 134 officials of the now-defunct 700-member Government Service for the Protection of Indians (SPI) are scheduled for trial.

"One cannot speak of genocide but rather of vicious crimes, committed by unscrupulous adventurers employed . . . by local economic and political powers . . . seeking to appropriate Indian lands in a manner recalling the massacres which in the last century nearly exterminated the Indians of North America," said General Costa Cavalcanti, present Minister of the Interior. (*Medical Tribune*, Dec. 8, 1969)

Department of the Interior documents suggest that the severe tuberculosis epidemics of the mid-1960's, which devastated tribes of the northeastern Amazon basin, were also deliberately induced, Dr. Braun reports. Landowners and speculators used an infected mestizo to introduce the tubercle bacillus; because they lacked prior immunity, "countless victims died quickly," states *Medical Tribune*.

BACTERIOLOGICAL WARFARE was only one phase of the extermination effort. Arsenic was added to Indian sugar supplies by one vindictive planter, according to Lorenzo Hamilton, Vice President of the National Foundation for the Indian, which has taken over the SPI's functions. Smallpox attacks on the Cintas Largas tribesmen were followed by armed assaults. The impending trial has spotlighted the danger of total extinction for the South American Indians, even without the deliberate onslaughts against them, Dr. Braun pointed out. First exposed to the white man 20 years ago, the northeastern Brazilian Urubu tribe, for example, has suffered a series of severe measles epidemics, one of which killed nearly a fifth of the tribe's members. The Oayanas Indians have been particularly vulnerable to epidemics of acute pneumonopathy. . . .

Although the Brazilian government has begun to build hospitals to care for the tribesmen, Dr. Braun is convinced that there is only one way to save the Indians. He cites French policy in French Guiana, which bans all unauthorized entry into Indian territories, and suggests that the Brazilian tribesmen be left "undisturbed in their own lands, which should be accessible only to outsiders with medical and scientific missions."

—Reprinted from *The Sciences*, April 1970

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The UAW Speaks Out Against Cambodia

A few days before his tragic death, Walter Reuther presided over a session of the board of the United Automobile Workers. A major point on its agenda was the Nixon policy regarding Cambodia, and as a result of its discussion, the following telegram was sent by Reuther to the President:

ON BEHALF OF THE UAW *I wish to convey to you our deep concern and distress over your action authorizing the use of United States forces and material in a broadening of the war in Indochina.*

Your decision to invade the territory of Cambodia can only increase the enormity of the tragedy in which our nation is already deeply and unfortunately involved in that region. Your action must stand as a repudiation of your oft-repeated pledge to bring this tragic war to an end and not to escalate it.

Widening the war at this point in time once again merely reenforces the bankruptcy of our policy of force and violence in Vietnam.

Your action taken without the consultation or authorization by the Congress has created a serious Constitutional crisis at a time when there is growing division in our nation. Many Senators are understandably aroused. Senator Cooper has clearly pointed out that your action represents a turnabout in your policy and Senator Aiken has warned that your escalation of the war means the end of the Vietnamization policy.

However this dangerous adventure turns out militarily, America has already suffered a moral defeat beyond measure among the people of the world.

You pledged to bring America together. Yet by your action you have driven the wedge of division deeper and you have dangerously alienated millions of young Americans. The bitter fruits of this growing alienation and frustration among America's youth have been harvested on the campus of Kent State University where the lives of four students involved only in an emotional protest against the war were ended by the needless and inexcusable use of military force.

At no time in the history of our free society have so many troops been sent to so many campuses to suppress the voice of protest by so many young Americans.

With the exception of a small minority, the American people, including our young people, reject violence in all its forms as morally repugnant and counter-productive. The problem, Mr. President, is that we cannot successfully preach nonviolence at home while we escalate mass violence abroad.

It is your responsibility to lead us out of the Southeast Asian War—to peace at home and abroad. We must mobilize for peace rather than for wider theaters of war in order to turn our resources and the hearts, hands and minds of our people to the fulfillment of America's unfinished agenda at home.

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Melvin M. Tumin

Violence and Democracy

The text below, with a few minor changes, was delivered as an address to the 1970 annual meeting of the Eastern Sociological Society in New York City.

IF THIS WERE five or seven years ago, some intellectual profit might be derived by speaking about "Some Positive Functions of Violence." But that lode has already been mined to utter exhaustion, so that not even strip-mining will yield enough ore to justify any serious investment.

Moreover, it is apparent that violence *per se,* like conflict, or peace, or war *per se,* cannot be judged as valuable or worthless. Further specifications are, obviously, always required—ends sought, values in balance, moral systems to be preserved. Even then, we are so lacking in the arithmetic required for moral or social balance that judgments of the net outcome are likely to be persuasive only to those who share common systems of weighting and preference. How much, for example, does the value of a smashed computer weigh against the value of 180 students momentarily "radicalized" by the sight of police dragging off the peer-group computer-smashers? And that is a relatively simple case; at least sufficiently simple so that we can predict how the polarization of opinion will line up. Maybe.

We are unavoidably led by these considerations to some matters of definition. Else we shall be debating things that are quite different, all under the name of violence. Let us start with the fact that legitimized wars are violent, and that police often use violence. If, then, we ask what we mean by applying the same term to those cases and to many others, such as street fights, riots, and the like, we see that the term violence is used to refer to the *application of force, actual or threatened, that results or promises to result in the harm or destruction of the person or property of others, or in the deprivation of their freedom.* This definition will cover the cases of war, police and street riots, and fist fights. It will also cover genocidal concentration camps and guerrilla wars and, unhappily, most of the practices followed in the rearing of children, in the conduct of classrooms, and in the establishment of durable patterns of dominance and subordination between spouses.

Now it doesn't make very good sense to have a term defined in such a way as to be equally applicable to wars, riots, genocide, and to child-rearing practices and marital relations. Those are not the same things. They differ in the intentions of the violent actors, in the degree of concern for the victim of violence, in the legitimacy of the action, and in the degree of harm done or threatened. They also differ in the balance between short- and long-term loss and gain. Note here the presumed long-term gain of violence in child-rearing, as against the short- and long-term *loss* implied by murder and genocide.

Yet, however embarrassing it is to speak of the use of force in these diverse contexts, it is not easy to get away from the fact that the use of force, actual or threatened, to get

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one's own way over the will of others is a basic modality of human interaction, and nothing seems finally to be able to substitute for it, if we assume that conflict of wills is a persisting feature of human interaction. Of course, there may be those who insist that they have never interposed their wills by force against the wills of others, not even their children's. They would prefer to say they have reasoned, persuaded, cajoled, urged, bargained, compromised, and discussed. I am unwilling to dismiss such claims as *total* nonsense; there are obvious differences in the speed and frequency of resort to force. Yet, however infrequently one resorts to force (and I include the invocation of the legitimate authority of positions here, with its implied threats against the well-being of those who might defy that authority), forceful coercion *is* part of the human game.

Having said this, it is crucial to realize that there are vast differences among societies in the situations they legitimate as justifying the use of violence; in the honors they accord for violent behavior; in the violence of their public entertainment and spectacles; in the glory they impute to violent behavior; and, by contrast, in the extent to which they strive to produce citizens who are sufficiently compassionate and capable of identifying with others, so that they use force, if at all, only with the greatest of reluctance, the greatest of possible gentility, and the quickest possible removal of the forceful pressures.

All this is important, as I see it, so that we shall not be beguiled into accepting as legitimate the question as to why some people are violent and others are not, with its implication that we are dealing with utterly different brands and breeds of human beings.

The fact of the matter is that there *is* violence *in all of us,* and one doesn't need any instinctual theory to account for it. So, too, there is violence in all societies, for societies are the scenes in which the interaction among conflicting wills and purposes takes place. Knowing that may help us become a bit more compassionate in our public responses, even to the kinds of violent behavior that seem most frightening, namely, those that involve one-to-one violence, in situations in which we ourselves are often involved, such as walking in the park, coming home from the theater, and the like. In those cases, maximum identification with the victim is possible, and hence maximum fear is generated for our own safety. Under those circumstances, we are likely to react with maximum punitiveness, being unable to keep our fears and righteous indignation from shaping our public responses. The implication here is that those responses should be shaped not by fear and indignation but by a realization of the circumstances that led the offender to his violent acts and what is required to reduce the likelihood that he and others will repeat those acts.

THE AWARENESS of the extent to which all of us, as individuals and as members of organized societies, are involved in the capacity for violence is important, too, as a caution against overlooking our own frequent *use* of violence in legitimate and approved contexts, and hence of how much we officially sponsor violence. These are uses into which we are socialized from earliest days on, by the model of child-rearing, by the training in masculinity and standing up for one's rights, by the approval of the maleness of the contact sports, by the concepts of family, tribal, and national honor that call us to arms, with high, moral-sounding phrases and much applause for violent acts committed in good names.

It is not, I *insist,* that violence *per se* in these contexts is less morally worthy than nonviolence. It is, after all, simply sentimental to deplore the use of force in human relations simply because it is force or because, by definition, it involves harm or injury or destruction of property or person or deprivation of freedom. There is nothing *intrinsically* wrong with those either. For, there obviously are occasions when the use of

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force is eminently justified, as when evil is sure to prevail unless superior counterforce is brought to bear against it, and the evil people and conditions are forcefully repressed. The loftiness of the pacifist ideal is matched only by its utter bankruptcy as a doctrine of social or political action under most conceivable human circumstances.

No—the danger of violence lies first in its *self-commending* character. For it is beguiling; it produces results; it is often emotionally gratifying far beyond compromise and discussion and yielding. For those very same reasons, once under way, it is far less subject to rational control and limitation than nonviolence. A primary reason here is the further incitement to violence that the apparent suffering of the victim seems to induce in those caught up in violent behavior. The dehumanization of the victim that is required to permit the initial act of cruelty or violence seems to be furthered by the triumph of violence and the apparent suffering of the victim. Perhaps this is because the victim's suffering is vivid testimony to his humanity; and until that evidence can be violently expunged, the man committing violence cannot continue his violence with an easy mind.

Saying these things causes me to wonder whether in fact I am so much a product of my own culture and time that I cannot really envision a world in which the resort to violence is absolutely minimal, and in which the training in childhood is such that cruelty and forceful harm to others is seen in just those terms, with all their implied condemnation. I may be making the mistake in characterizing as a panhuman modality something that is indeed parochial and culturally limited, but so deeply ingrained as not to be transcendable into a new way of thinking about men. I beg you, however, not to tax me with a lack of imagination. I have had my utopian dreams along with the best or worst of you. Rather, let us seek to discover the conditions of social organization that might minimize the use of violence.

I give you as a starter a dilemma to the effect that the condition necessary for making human beings out of prehuman babies is organized social life, and that organized social life always has boundaries that can be maintained only by some sense of loyalty and commitment to one's ingroups. In turn, this implies outgroups that are alien, strangers and desecrators of the secular and sacred norms, whether these are kin, clan, tribes, ethnic groups, or nation-states. The existence of these aggregates is therefore highly conducive to the use of force. Moreover, as they grow larger, from clan to state to nation, they almost always involve the accumulation of superior technologies of destruction as instruments of the collectivity, and hence make possible larger-scale human killing. A state may someday be created that does not reflect the special interests of one class over another. But that won't have anything to do with its need to resort to force to manage the diverse claims upon the common goods and services and to restrain the general range of deviation that is generic to all societies, but especially so in societies made up of diverse and numerous peoples. Above all, unless there exists some unenvisionable form of world society, those national aggregates seem unavoidably led to mutual destruction by actions they perceive as necessary for national survival.

Our own society is surely a curious mixture of peace and force. Perhaps more than any other large-scale society in the world we are nominally committed to the peaceful resolution of internal conflicts and have probably done no worse than most others in seeking peaceful means of reconciling international conflicts. I suppose I ought immediately to say that we have done no better than others either, lest someone see evil intentions in my phrases. In any event, given this commitment in our *ideals,* we are surely a sad sight in our *actualities*. Any analysis of the causes of violence in the United States, and especially of criminal violence, has to take into account the role of social and

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economic inequalities (in the face of claims to equal opportunity, and the pressure to live well and ostentatiously) in the production of criminal violence, especially of such acts as robbery.

I am not yet including political violence—in the ghettos and on the college campuses. For the moment I deliberately confine myself to the more common forms of criminal violence, as defined for instance by the FBI Index. Violent seizure of what one wants when one cannot get it without violence seems to be now, as always in our history, a fairly normal procedure for two segments of our population. First, the wealthy and the powerful who, when blocked by existing laws or rules from having their way, are capable, by stealth or force or both, of altering the rules or avoiding them, without much fear of reprisal. Second, the group that, because of its deprived and degraded condition of life, acts as though it had little or nothing to lose and hence is "free" to engage in violent behavior without serious concern for the possible negative consequences if caught.

Predictably, the focus of concern and indignation regarding violence is upon the second group, since the depredations of the first group, however much more injurious to the public well-being, are either concealed from the public view or are converted by semantic legerdemain into contributions to the public welfare. It is quite evident, however, that the normally punitive and indignant responses of the public to the violence of the deprived have done little or nothing to reduce the likelihood of more violence in the future. It seems equally clear that if we wish people to seek their ends with the same steady refrain from violence which we practice, we have to make it as possible for them as it is for us to achieve their life's ambitions through peaceful, noncriminal means.

If one says petulantly, in response, that after all one has worked *his* way through life arduously, nonviolently, and without resort to crime, then the answer clearly is that we shall have to provide the same kinds of life histories for those whom we wish to convert to nonviolent behavior. Similarly, if we wish others to be as restrained by concern for consequences as we are by our consideration of what there is to lose for us, then we shall have to see to it that they have as much to lose and that they can perceive things this way. Or we shall have to see to it that the same preponderance of noncriminal, nonviolent stimuli, associations, and rewards are present in their lives as in ours. Or, if you prefer a criminal or violent subculture theory, then we shall have to create the same kinds of noncriminal subcultures for *their* exposure. Or, if you prefer a "drift" theory of delinquency and violence, then we shall have to provide the same kinds of blockages to drift into delinquency and violence as are present in our lives.

I take it, moreover, that I don't have to spend even a moment here discussing the contribution of our prisons and our usual treatment of criminals to the furtherance of their criminal and violent careers. That, of course, is so painfully evident that we are restrained from tearing down prison walls with our own hands only because we wouldn't know what to substitute and because there would be many, many more opposed to us who believe in prisons and all they imply.

The issues of criminal violence are not exhausted, however, by dealing only with robbery, mugging, and the like. We are confronted with the fact that two violent crimes, murder and rape, are often best understood as violence among intimates.

More than half, and sometimes as many as two-thirds or three-quarters, of these two acts are committed by people against others with whom they have had some degree of previous intimacy, including husband-wife, parent-child, and brother-sister relationships. The same emotions that permit people in these relationships to be benignly concerned with each other provide

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the psychic triggers to violence when the conditions of peaceful intimacy are betrayed or violated. Because these are mostly thoughtless, mindless, spontaneous acts, they are probably outside the reach of normal deterrence, except among those who have so very much to lose if caught that they are bereft even of the power to act out their most intense passion.

So, wounded as many of us are by that impotence induced by future-mindedness, we suffer, instead, ulcerated colons or deeply-gnashed and ground-down teeth, or other psychosomatic ailments, plus endless wounded pride, as our price for keeping the peace. And even if we were to let ourselves go and indulge our rage, most of us would probably find ourselves so horrified by our first acts of "self-liberation" as from then on to be permanently imprisoned by contrition and shame. Or, worse still, we might develop a real taste for violent indulgence, and discover ourselves in endless conflict between our former and new selves.

In any event, it is important to make distinctions among the various acts all of which are classified as criminal violence, and to see how utterly different in onset, actors, consequences, motives, and the like they often are. After all, rape, especially when it is postcoital regret, as it often is, is hardly the same action system as assaulting a strange woman in whose purse *alone* you are interested, but whom you must hurt enough to be sure she cannot identify you. Such diversity of motives and other parts of the action systems in various violent crimes is an elementary consideration for sophisticated sociologists. But how little this notion seems to have penetrated the minds of the lay public and of our government officials!

Fritz Redl has recently written a gorgeous paper on violence in the schools, in which he delineates 12 different sets of motives and reasons behind violent actions by school children. These actions are so diverse in their motivation and so utterly different in what they call for by way of appropriate response, that to treat them homogeneously as violence is to be absurd. If this is true for school children, it cannot be less true for adults.

TURNING TO POLITICAL VIOLENCE brings us to quite a different set of issues. Let it be acknowledged at the outset that this society is now engaged in what many, including myself, consider to be an utterly unwarranted and murderous war. I do not think the other side is any better, morally or politically, and in peacetime they are politically far worse than we are as a system. But that is not the issue, because I do not think we are doing anything effective to see to it that in peacetime they may have the same system of peaceful resolution of internal conflicts that we do. I do not for a moment deny that our so-called national leaders believe their own slogans. That is a cause for despair. I am sure they believe their slogans about preserving democracy and the free world. But the fact of the matter is that they are not accomplishing this at all; and, of course, there is no solution at this moment, and given these costs, except to stop the war immediately. So any discussion of internal violence committed by radical or other students in the name of stopping the war has to take account of the war and all it implies.

There is today in our society a very tenuous balance of diverse political forces, with the majority seeming inclined to advocate and applaud forceful repression of all kinds of liberties and freedoms in the name of peace and order. Given this condition, one has to hope and pray that our antiwar protesters will be more rational, circumspect, restrained, calculating, and knowledgeable than we or anybody has any right to expect them to be under the circumstances.

On the one hand, we cannot urge them to withhold their demonstrations and their protests simply because they may evoke the bitter antilibertarian sentiments and approval

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of authoritarian power that seem to characterize many of our fellow citizens. Yet we dare not neglect these possibilities. For after all, as a *collective* society, we are, in our *formal* operations, probably much more democratic than one would expect, given the sentiment-structure and proclivities for authoritarianism that seem to characterize so many of the increasingly less silent majority. Hence, while one cannot argue against demonstrations on the grounds that they may enrage others, one can urge that the demonstrators exercise a modicum of rational calculation in behalf of preserving the fabric of democratic processes, for them and for us.

For there is a great current threat to that unbelievable and marvelous social invention called democratic polity. It is a very tender and easily bruised plant. Its roots are always shallow. It needs extraordinary care and cultivation. It is all too easily overcome by noxious airs and weeds. Enough of this horticultural metaphor. The fact of the matter is that there is no conceivable decent life possible by any of the values that most of us have come to appreciate if we do not have a democratic society. And so we must ask our young people and our other protesters (and ourselves) not to let their despair and impatience lead them to deal lightly with democracy. We have barely begun to establish democracy in this country. We shall ruin it for sure if we start matching violence with violence.

Nor can we afford to overlook distinctions between more and less democratic societies or mechanisms. We cannot afford to clamor for taking the whole society down because it is so rotten in so many of the things it does. For, on the balance, there is still much to cherish and cultivate and harbor and protect.

I do not believe that President Nixon or Vice-President Agnew are capable of appreciating these distinctions, however unsubtle they are. We are in that ironic situation where we have to ask ourselves, and others like us, including our children and our students, to be more sensible, more wise, more restrained, more concerned for the welfare of our society and the preservation of our barely flourishing democratic processes than the elected officials who are selected and paid to do just that for us.

Free speech in this country is so very limited and yet so far more ample and broad-reaching than any conceivable alternative system might provide today or tomorrow, that those who need free speech to live, as all of us do, cannot sanction a policy, however righteously motivated, of meeting the denial of free speech by some with a denial of free speech to others. I am not sure at all that virtue will triumph. It almost never does. But then there is no alternative, because the other possible courses of action involve us in choosing whose *dictatorial* authority we prefer. And I prefer none.

The same considerations, of course, apply to the fight against inequality, whether between black and white, and whether economic, social, or political. The dramatic and symbolic value of violent acts of protest and demonstration cannot be denied. But that value has to be weighed against the overall consequences, now and in the future. At least *I* have to weigh them in judging them. If I were black and poor, I cannot guarantee that I would not be more persuaded by my despair and rage at the slow pace of change than I would be by rational calculations about possible futures, slowly eked out over a lifetime of pain and denial.

But that does not make correct the policies advocated out of despair. It only makes them understandable. There is still a visible enough chance of slow improvement toward greater equality in this country for me, in my judgment, to insist on preserving those mechanisms over other political programs, simply because all other alternatives that I have heard are sure to take us all beyond recovery of anything decent. It is surely one of the gifts of life and of an advantaged position, and one of its attendant obligations, to ad-

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The Panthers and the "Zionists"

"The white Left in the U.S.A. is comprised of a large percentage of the Jewish population. Before the Black Panther Party took its stand on the Palestinian people's struggle there were problems but the support of the White Left for the Black Panther Party was concrete. However, since our stand the White Left started floundering and became undecided. This leaves us with no alternative than to believe that a large portion of these people are Zionists and are therefore racists.

"It was a Zionist judge, Judge Friedman, who sentenced Huey P. Newton to 2–15 years in jail. It was a Zionist judge, Judge Hoffman, who allowed the other Zionists to go free but has kept Bobby Seale in jail and sentenced him to 4 years for contempt charges. Bobby Seale alone stands trial again in April on conspiracy charges. With whom did he conspire? The Zionists?

"The other Zionists in the Conspiracy 8 trial were willing and did sacrifice Bobby Seale and his role in the conspiracy trial to gain publicity. We once again condemn Zionism as a racist doctrine. We reiterate our solidarity with the Palestinian people's struggle for national liberation against Israeli imperialism and Zionism aided and abetted by U.S. imperialism. The one-eyed bandit of Tel-Aviv, Moyshe Dyan [sic], must be hunted down and killed."

—Connie Matthews, International Coordinator, Black Panther Party in The Black Panther, *April 25, 1970*

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Concerning this remarkable statement, a few things need to be noted:

(1) It will come as a surprise to the defendants at the Chicago trial—only two of whom are Jewish, as it happens—that they are Zionists.

(2) The "code" identification of Jews as Zionists is a technique that has in the past been used systematically by fascist and right-wing anti-Semites, e.g., by Gerald K. Smith. We invite correspondence from New Left defenders of the Black Panthers explaining why such methods are any more defensible when employed by Connie Matthews than when employed by Gerald L. K. Smith.

—i. h.

vocate programs that one can see as more correct and promising than others, however unappealing they are to the victims of the situations one is trying to correct. Victims may speak with true, righteous indignation from their hearts. But that isn't necessarily the same as sound politics.

I was saved during my youthful Bolshevism by professors who understood what was agitating me and others like me, and who were unwilling to discard me on the academic junk heap simply because I was wild and irrational in my politics. In retrospect I am aware how important it was that I made it possible, by not being myself totally impossible, for them to protect me from others who did not understand. I was also saved by the fact that I did not have a subculture of campus violence to reinforce my own very hesitant tendencies in that direction. It was, I confess, rather easy to prate Bolshevik doctrines about the "transitional dictatorship of the proletariat" so long as I did not have to face the consequences of that system in action or of the actual violent revolutionary actions that other circumstances might have called forth.

I do not expect my students to be any wiser than I was. And I am aware of the supportive subcultures of violence that have sprung up on campuses and of how exhilarating they can be. But I know, too, that the most irresponsible among the students threaten that incredibly beautiful thing called the free university as much as do those many mindless educators who resist all change. One cannot prefer the embittered clamor by the aged for stability to the exuberance of the youth for destructiveness, or vice versa. They are both antagonistic to decent civility and society.

THERE ARE AT LEAST two rules here that must be followed if any of us is to have a chance to survive these challenges. The first is that one must be prepared to lose once in a while, and to search for ways to

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win again within the framework of organized social life, assuming the processes of change are available. Those who are not prepared to lose cannot live in a democracy, and they are enemies of democracy.

The other rule, just as basic, is that a democracy means participation in decision-making at all relevant points by all persons affected by the decisions. The ancient and traditional model of the wise captor and the humble captive that has dominated campuses heretofore no longer will work. Fortunately, some exemplary campuses are beginning to develop mechanisms to enforce both those rules—the rules of alternating winning and losing, without destroying the fabric of the organized life; and the rule of maximizing relevant participation. Therein lies our only hope.

Those rules also tell us what is wrong with violence and what is right about non-violence. Violence, it is clear, means the suspension or the destruction of democracy. For, however much it may be true that democratic societies have come into being only after violent overthrow of the previous societies, it is equally true that democracies could not begin to survive until they had purged their systems of the revolutionary cast of mind and of those cultivated inclinations to resort to violence. By inference this tells us what is right about democracy. Among other things, it minimizes the resort to violence.

I am obviously giving top priority to the maintenance and strengthening of democracy and equality in any set of solutions offered for present-day problems. In these regards, this is a position that is substantially different from those being offered from the Right and the so-called Left. The Right is saying, in effect, that we must have order and stability at virtually any cost. The so-called Left is saying that we must have change at virtually any cost. What we will surely get if either side prevails is the range of any and all, and mostly negative, costs, and that means costs to the values of democracy and equality. If the "Right" is wrong in urging forceful repression of general freedoms and the suspension of democratic governance in order to yield order and stability, the "Left" is no less wrong in urging the same things in the name of their slogans.

It will no longer do to endorse the destruction by either side because we understand and commiserate with what led people to engage in the destruction. Those who believe that this society is so totally bad that it must be torn down come what may and, along with it, the universities, are as cruel and vicious enemies of democracy, fair play, and equality as those who believe and act as if this society was totally good and must be preserved intact at any cost.

I am aware, as the prophet has warned, that those who stand in the middle during historical moments when everything is polarized are likely to get symmetrical bumps on both sides of their heads. But where else is there to stand?

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Josette Alia

The Shambles of Nanterre

The following article is reprinted, with permission, from Le Nouvel Observateur *(Numéro 278, and copyright* © Le Nouvel Observateur, *1970). This independent weekly, printed in Paris, has in the past been decidedly sympathetic to student revolt. We need hardly emphasize for our readers the various parallels between Nanterre and American universities. Paul Ricoeur, who has since resigned as dean of Nanterre's Faculty of Letters, is a man of high intellectual distinction and moral probity. His article "Power and the State" appeared in* DISSENT, *Winter 1958.*—ED.

"WHY DO THEY always headline Nanterre, when the present problems involve the *whole* university system?" Exasperated students in France keep asking this question. One answer may be that, commencing this past February and continuing for a period of weeks, Nanterre again exemplified all the dilemmas and dramas that are the lot of French universities today. In this instance, it was a dilemma and drama for Nanterre's dean, Paul Ricoeur, who loyally sought to play a conciliating role; and it was also a dilemma for the government, which found itself trapped by its own machiavellianism and violence; it was a dilemma that dramatized the importance of the student movements, floundering amid differences and dissensions. On February 20 there emerged, sharply profiled, the summit of the Calvary Ricoeur had been painfully climbing ever since June 1969. A philosopher, a calm, immensely attentive, inquiring, open-minded and nonviolent man, the Dean of the Faculty of Letters at Nanterre had embarked on what he fully realized was a thorny path. After the fall of Pierre Grappin, his predecessor as dean, they'd offered him a wager: can a man be a leftist and still administer Nanterre? The odds were ten to one against him. Yet Ricoeur did not feel he could refuse, and so he accepted. Why? Perhaps because he is above all else—even in the eyes of his most rabid opponents—a "great and honest man." Too clear-thinking to be naive, too honest to be cynical, this large-spirited man—a Protestant and a product of the great liberal tradition in France—saw that between the ultra-leftist students who want to "smash the whole university system" and a regime that, secretly, dreams only of bringing all protesters "to heel," he was walking a tightrope.

In the beginning, his calculation turned out to be correct. But by February 20, Paul Ricoeur knew he had lost. That day, his assistant René Remond read a "startling" report before the university's Administrative Council: it enumerated the ideological, politically inspired misdemeanors, attacks, assaults, beatings, and rapes committed on the Nanterre campus during the previous two weeks. "It took our breath away," a professor said later. "Each of us had known of one or two cases of violence, but when they all were put together they painted an ominous picture." The most serious incident was a brawl between a Maoist and a Communist group, after which a regular member of the Confédération Générale du Travail [the CGT—the French trade union movement dominated by the Communists] had been

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taken to the hospital with a double skull fracture. It was not known whether he would live.

After long discussions, the Council came to three major decisions:

(1) It was agreed that the Dean would make a formal statement about "insecurity." The vote endorsing the need for this alarm signal was 35 in favor, one abstention.

(2) The Council requested that the cam-

You Can't Tell the Players . . .

We list below the various groups to which students belong who are enrolled at Nanterre and who carry on sustained or sporadic political activities. In periods of tension, they may number some two thousand, or about ten percent of the Nanterre student body. Membership in these groups ranges from several dozen to several hundred persons.

MAOISTS

La Gauche Prolétarienne, or GP (Proletarian Left): Their principal activity is directed at workers (both on the job and at home). They publish a newspaper, *La cause du peuple.* They oppose the French Communist party, which they accuse of following a class collaborationist policy. Very active.

Vive la Révolution, or VLR (Long Live the Revolution): Militants, organized around the group's newspaper, which has the same name. They work in liaison with other Maoist groups.

L'Humanité Rouge, or HR (Red Humanity): The moving spirits behind a newspaper of the same name who stress cooperation between workers and students.

ANARCHISTS

By definition, not organized. They believe in no specific group dynamic. They call for individual action and for a propaganda of deeds, not words.

TROTSKYITES

La Ligue Communiste, or LC (Communist League). The French section of the Fourth International. It encourages Red Committees at the University, which are responsible for establishing liaison between the student body at large and the League's cells. The LC holds that there is no such thing as a university strategy, only a university tactic of a revolutionary strategy. Its national organization publishes the newspaper *Rouge.*

L'Alliance des Jeunes pour le Socialisme, or AJS: Dissidents from the Fourth International who emphasize labor organization. Their publication is *Jeunes Revolutionnaires.*

L'Alliance Marxiste Revolutionnaire and Marxistes Révolutionnaires: Both groups are dissidents from the Fourth International, supporting the theory that the revolution will come from the Third World.

Lutte Ouvrière, or LO (Workers' Struggle): Stresses primarily labor organization. Its theoretical positions are close to those of the LC except in its analysis of the nature of such Communist states as China, Cuba, and the Vietnamese revolutionaries, which it describes as petty-bourgeois.

"TRADITIONAL" PARTIES

Les Étudiants Socialistes Unifiés, or ESU (United Socialist Students): Includes students of the parent PSU (Parti Socialiste Unifié). Publishes the *Tribune Socialiste.* Maintains tactical alliances with the LC.

L'Union des Étudiants Communistes, or UEC: Publishes *Le Nouveau Clarté* and is represented on Nanterre's Administrative Council. Well-organized and active.

Le MARC 200 (Movement for Action and Critical Research): Consists of various groups of socialist tendencies, among them members of the ESU. Played along in the participation game in order to demonstrate the impossibility of the Faure reform.

MODERATES

Le CLERU (Liaison Committee of Students for University Reform): Supports the reform law in toto.

RIGHTISTS

La FNEF (National Federation of French Students): Active in the Law School. Urges strikes in protest against leftist "provocations."

Le GUD (Group Union Right): Extreme-Rightists in the Law School, exhibiting a nostalgia for the past (Mussolini cult), and associated with the neo-fascist Ordre Nouveau. GUD claims to be ridding the various Schools of leftist elements and to be rallying moderate elements to its cause.

—BRUNO CHARPENTIER
(Le Nouvel Observateur)

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pus be classified as the equivalent of a public thoroughfare. In the thinking of those present, this meant simply that Nanterre campus streets should be subject to the same regulations as those of Paris or of the suburb Nanterre itself. In other words, the police could intervene at Nanterre, as they do on all public thoroughfares *in the event of violence*. But since this permitted police intervention on campus, it was clearly a grave step. No one pretended otherwise. Ricoeur firmly believed, however, that the regulation would not be put into effect immediately: it would first have to be promulgated (the same regulation had long been in force at night), and any application would have to await a serious outbreak. Someone timidly suggested the possibility that the police would exploit the ruling or abuse its application. The objection was not sustained, and 29 members of the Council voted for the regulation, 2 against it, and 3 abstained.

(3) If these measures did not suffice to guarantee security, the Council judged that the closing of Nanterre would be inevitable. On this point, debate was violent. In effect, it was the Right that was threatening to close Nanterre, and for the last three months the Right had been gaining adherents in the Council. Finally, the eventuality of closing down was voted 18 in favor, 6 opposed, 10 abstaining.

As Ricoeur explained later,

> We were caught in a dilemma. Either we did nothing, in which case violence would assume such proportions that the University would be smashed to smithereens. Or we closed down—which would mean the end of the Nanterre experiment, with all the political consequences that implied. We believed we had found a middle-of-the-road solution in calling for a form of intermittent control. That was a mistake. What we took to be a "middle-ground" solution was a step forward, the consequences of which we had not assessed.

Behind this courageous, firmly delivered self-criticism, one nonetheless sensed great bitterness or, rather, despair. Throughout his life, Ricoeur has been an *engagé*. In 1940, in a Pomeranian *Oflag,* standing in the sand, barefooted and in rags, under the noses of German guards he had given his first lectures to demythicize Nietzsche, because he believed one had to fight against an insidious ideology just as one had to try to escape or actively resist. Subsequently, he always strove to maintain harmony between his philosophical ideas and his political actions: to be at once a humanist and a revolutionary; to restructure society without having to integrate violence in his philosophy. He pushed this line of reasoning very far, to the point where, without losing his dignity or compromising his position, he found the garbage pail dumped on his head.

On February 20 his wager seemed lost. The students saw him as "a good sort but a political weakling" (Communist League); "a pal of ours, unfortunately taken over by the Revisionists" (Proletarian Left). But the most painful blow of all was still to come. On March 4, *le Monde,* in two fearsome sentences, condemned him, buried him, and stuck a cross on his grave: "The silent majority is safer . . . among the anarchists than among the forces for order. There were more casualties, more threats against life in two days than in two trimesters of unrest. . . ." And so Ricoeur drained his bitter cup. *Le Monde* also meant his longtime friend Beuve-Méry, and his peers, Christian humanists of the Left. Abandoned by everyone, would he resign? He was considering it. The Sunday before he even had dictated a letter of resignation addressed to the Minister of Education, Olivier Guichard. Instantly, between Sunday night and Monday, delegations of students, both moderates and reformers, came one after another to his office. "We've got to stand by him," one of them said. "He's our last chance, our only possibility of avoiding fascism of the Right or of the Left." Did Ricoeur believe that? Perhaps

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not. He was ill and depressed. But he is a resilient man. The appeal for police "protection," even though indirect, had been an error weighted with consequences. But the haste with which Minister of the Interior Raymond Marcellin threw himself into the breach that had been incautiously opened to him left Ricoeur, oddly enough, with one chance.

For, in cop jargon, to open a campus to the protection routinely provided for a city street means, "Hop to it! Bash 'em!" Ricoeur's S.O.S., made public on Thursday, February 26, was the signal. That Friday, police vans arrived at Nanterre. University officials were thunderstruck. They had asked for nothing like this.

"They fell on us without warning," Ricoeur said. "We were not consulted about either the timing or the nature of the intervention." In his view, both were ill-chosen: in the face of police, helmeted and armed with clubs, the revival of the students' united front was inevitable. May 1968 seemed again on the horizon. "It's just like the fourteenth," a militant anarchist shouted joyously at the sight of the blue helmets. A brutal confrontation was unavoidable. Was it actually sought? Was the government (or at least Marcellin, a hardliner) only waiting for the Dean's mistake in order to launch a "purge" operation intended "to eliminate the ringleaders so as to start afresh on a solid basis," as they say at the Ministry of the Interior?

One thing is sure: between February 20 and 27, maintenance of order by police on the Nanterre campus had been meticulously planned in the course of a very special meeting at the Prefecture of Police. In attendance were certain members of the Administrative Council of the University, representatives from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Interior, and some co-workers of Maurice Grimaud, the Paris Prefect of Police. There was lengthy discussion of a faculty plan to itemize eventual trouble spots (buildings, street intersections), to determine where the forces of order should be stationed—in a word, to program police occupation of the campus.

Therefore, when the first police vans arrived at the outskirts of the Nanterre campus on Friday, February 27, everything was ready for a minutely organized riposte to the "anarchist provocations" that seemed to be expected as a too-good-to-be-true pretext. But the "provocations" did not materialize. Friday was marred by nothing more than a few incidents. It was on Monday that everything broke loose, following—and this must be emphasized—the untimely intervention of an extreme Right group, the GUD (Groupe Union Droite), whose militants, helmeted and carrying iron bars, arrived from Assas to "assure the *partiels* [serialized exams]" for Nanterre's economics students in the first, third, and fourth years. Immediately, the leftists reacted and attacked. The GUD militants withdrew behind a police line. Rocks flew, the police charged, and the big battle between leftists and police was on.

The melée was to last two days—until Tuesday evening. By Monday afternoon, the large mass of moderate and apolitical students were drawn into the conflict. About 1,000 students boycotted their classes, booed the police, and finally intervened—in a word, followed the leftist groups which, until then, had been described as "isolated" or "minority" elements. The next day, about 2,000 students took part in the veritable battle that resulted in 200 wounded on both sides. As to the political balance sheet: in two afternoons, police intervention succeeded in re-forming the unity of the fractured student movement. "One little group could tangle with another all day long," a Trotskyite said, "but once confronted by the police there was no more of that. It was all for one and one for all; everybody was behind us."

Parallel to this almost unhoped-for student regrouping (the leftists, in any event, had given up hope for it under "normal conditions"), one could observe a definite

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hardening in the attitude of the police. In the morning, the police stationed around the campus men from the so-called intervention squads—in police jargon, the first reserves—and also men from the mobile police, or second reserves. All this took place while those in command were in radio communication with the Prefecture of Police and the Ministry of the Interior. From the outset, something went wrong. When the police saw some students arrive helmeted and carrying bulging bags, they asked the Prefecture for instructions. The reply was, "Don't intervene." The police glowered but obeyed. Their mood worsened as the day passed: in the heat of the fighting (by then the campus was a veritable battlefield), the police, held back with difficulty, chaffed to exercise the "right of pursuit" to which they lay claim. They stamped up and down in front of the buildings they were forbidden to enter and from which they were receiving a deluge of assorted projectiles. Their casualties were numerous.

Toward seven o'clock in evening, the order to "throw the grenades" unleashed an explosion of hatred that quickly got out of bounds. The student was no longer a demonstrator, he was an enemy. It was no longer a matter of maintaining order. It was hand-to-hand combat—to such a degree that the mobile guards of the second reserve had to be hastily recalled to isolate the police in one intervention squad. Apparently out of control, they were yelling "Kill 'em!" They blocked the passage of an ambulance and clobbered and crushed everything that came within reach—including automobiles and one innocent parking attendant. . . . Had all this been planned because some highly-placed person (or persons) wanted a violent confrontation?

It does seem that this was the case. Marcellin seemed to be hoping for a great deal—or so it is said. In the classic manner of a Minister of the Interior, he was convinced (by dint of saying so) that the notorious university troubles could easily be settled: at the first chance, a hundred or so of the leftist "ringleaders" should be arrested and Nanterre would be "cleaned up." The good seed would be separated from the chaff; students would return docilely to peaceful studies at a university finally purged of the May gangs—for which read purged of the Faure reform law, which at the same time could be publicly branded a "failure."

THIS TACTIC involved a risk, underscored by Guichard: the risk of resoldering student unity, of perhaps restoring a measure of student-professor solidarity or—unlikely, but one never knows—a student-worker understanding. There was, furthermore, a specific preoccupation: the Ministry of National Education—Guichard is a prudent man—did not want to see Nanterre closed down, for then 15–20,000 students would inundate Paris like a wave, and they would be rebellious, ready for action—and armed. Accordingly, as of Tuesday evening it was clear that, given the scope of the student reaction, Marcellin had erred. The first sheaf of statements from the labor unions was circulating among ministerial desks like so many storm warnings. At the Wednesday meeting of the Council of Ministers, it had to be conceded, despite Georges Pompidou's mounting irritation, that the government had placed itself in an impasse it knew so well: the impasse of May 1968. Snatching the spluttering grenade before it bounced, Guichard promptly hurled it into another camp—Ricoeur's.

"You, as the elected dean, together with the elected administrative council are, by terms of the university reform bill, responsible for maintaining order in your schools," the Minister said, in substance. "At your request, we have furnished police support for three days. The result is nil. What else have you to propose? Do you wish additional steps, or different steps, to be taken?" In other words, can you offer proof that Nanterre is able to function normally without the police? If you cannot, we will take over.

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Again, Nanterre's problem had been squarely stated. But this time as a hot problem, in the context of a seriously deteriorating situation and with minimum time for a response. What could Ricoeur do? He was trapped. His only escape was to appeal to the students, to lead them finally to settle the dispute themselves.

On Friday, the two deans of Nanterre proposed a treaty of sorts: all student groups would subscribe to a nonaggression pact. In exchange, police elements would remain off the campus grounds. The government refused to rescind the "public thoroughfare" tactic; this was the price of the last skirmish. But at least the regulation would not be acted on if there were no further incidents. In a word, the "treaty" amounted to reestablishing the famous consensus that had made the pre-May 1968 University a society apart, a society without infractions, work interruptions, or police. Displaying some courage, Paul Ricoeur picked up his wager of last June. But now he was no longer alone and with his back to the wall: the students were all there with him. Ricoeur's treaty would work only if the majority of students accepted it; that is to say, if those who wanted to "smash" the University (the Maoists) were isolated or, more exactly, rendered incapable of action; it would work if reformism, even revolutionary reformism, were to carry the day against the theory of imminent revolution.

Logically, one would then see the end of splinter groups and the beginning of realignments in anticipation of a perhaps serious but constructive opposition.

It must be said—and why not?—that since May 1968, the student movement had disintegrated; it had fallen into what its theoreticians call "false tactics." One leftist said,

> It's very simple. We were up to our necks in image projection. Each little group would arrive at demonstrations to show off its strength, each had its own slogan, its own litany. Some shouted "Mao!"—others Trotsky!"—others "Che!" And the anarchists—the most consistent of us all, maybe—yelled "Zorro!" So much for shared political bases! I'm not exaggerating. The proof is that the only grounds for coalition were two completely external issues—Vietnam and Palestine. And what a coalition! It was completely misguided in its tactics: we popularized the struggle of the Palestinians only in order to be able (for a "good cause") to recruit French militants. . . .

Most often it was activism for the sake of activism.

THEY DREAM . . . Oh yes, a beautiful dream . . . They are not so numerous on campus but they will fight for their "toehold" in the factories "till doomsday." Of course, it is not true—that is, not entirely true. The militants do what they call "drumming"; i.e., they distribute pamphlets at the gates of Renault and Citroën, and since they are faced by the burly stalwarts of the CGT [Confédération Générale du Travail] security forces, this is not absolutely safe. Still others —more extreme, more generous—"go into the factory," that is, they give up everything and sign on for jobs in plants where they are promptly spotted and denounced. The classic tactic is to isolate them: they are tied down to an assembly line, between a worker from Mali and another from Yugoslavia. The result: no possible communication. Eight hours on the assembly line, militant activities in the evening, pamphlet distribution on Sunday. They don't last three months. . . .

My companion was speaking without sarcasm or irony. With regret, rather: what revolutionary potential was being ruined, what energy misdirected and wasted; what impetuous spirit left untapped. . . . And then his anguished question: "In these circumstances, how do we keep from being fatally isolated, cut off—how do we avoid the university-ghetto?"

—*Translated by* ADRIENNE FOULKE

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Henri Rabasseire

Engaged Science—or Scientists?

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY *was written before Cambodia, Kent and Jackson, hence at a moment the classes of 1970–74 may consider prehistoric. My essay defends a position that has perhaps been passed over by events. I argue that the university as such should preserve its political neutrality, or try to preserve as much of it as possible; but the fact is that since May it has become the most political place in the country. By ordinary standards, I should then withdraw my essay, capitulating to the power of fact. But I am not quite prepared to do that.*

Insofar as the university is a place for study and analysis, it is not an agency for action—except on matters concerning its own affairs. Members of the university, whether teachers, students, or administrators, are of course entirely free to act politically, as individuals or in groups. But in moments of great political crisis, this distinction may become blurred. Suppose the Nixon administration manages to achieve what so far has been possible only to a Republican or Democratic administration separately: that is, to have both a depression and a war. Suppose, moreover, that the American working class will be no more inclined to revolutionary action than it was during the thirties, and that none of the constituted powers, such as Congress, is prepared to assume leadership. In such a case, it might be conceivable that only the academy could provide leadership for the country. I do not say this will happen; only that it is possible. The university would then exchange its scholarly functions for public action, its detached stance of objectivity for ardent advocacy.

To recognize such a possibility is not, however, to rejoice over it. What might, in extreme emergencies, be regarded as tolerable, or even necessary, need not be justified as desirable or be allowed to become the norm. On the contrary, the academy should remain conscious of its obligation to return to its autonomous position and proper functions as soon as possible; otherwise, it may cease being a university. And it must be free to criticize the new powers, if and when they are constituted, as it criticized the old ones.

Even if one grants—as do some people who in principle are committed to the idea of a disinterested and autonomous university—that we may enter an emergency of such dimensions that it is necessary for a time to suspend this principle, it still remains necessary to assert the principle and to insist that measures taken in behalf of an emergency not be allowed to become permanent.

For these reasons I commit my essay to print, hoping that its claim to relevance will in time be vindicated.—June 1, 1970.

IN THE MARCH–APRIL issue of DISSENT, Richard Robbins discussed the academic insurgents who recently tried to "liberate" some professional associations. He cited as examples the election of Louis Kampf to vice-president of the Modern Language Association, Staughton Lynd's challenge for the presidency of the American Historical Association, and the founding of an association parallel to the American Sociological Association by radical sociologists. All this in itself does not strike me as a very troublesome matter. I would not be disturbed by the prospect of New Leftists having to at-

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tend the banquets and White House receptions that go with these jobs, nor even by the expectation that they may channel some foundation money or Fulbright scholarships to their friends. Such things have been done before. I am disturbed, however, by one problem that Robbins did not explore: the threat, voiced in their caucus resolutions, to pervert these academic societies into vehicles for some political program.

At the meeting of the American Philosophical Association late last year, professors Sidney Morgenbesser and Thomas Nagel announced their plan to hold "seminars for the philosophical treatment of such issues as the draft and abortion," and that they want "philosophy departments to provide a setting for the development of positive programs." Professor Kampf thinks English literature textbooks are "culturally irrelevant to working-class students," and Professor Howard Zinn urges historians to create a "radical history aiming not at reconstructing the past but at building the future." Such programs do not answer the real problem of university reform, but by answering the wrong question they threaten to make the university even more irrelevant than it is. Professors Morgenbesser and Nagel propose to do in the classroom what they ought to do in the city; they confuse their job as teachers with their duty as citizens.

Yet they touch upon a real problem. The once-vaunted aloofness of the scholar has become a curse; new problems demand the admission of more modern subject matter into the curriculum; "knowledge for its own sake" and "value-free research" are no longer taken for granted, and students are getting impatient with the pretense that they are adepts of science while they are merely pursuing a diploma. The university is asked to justify its existence. Both the insurgents and their opponents on the Establishment side want a university that is useful, be it by training defense experts, social engineers, and ideological defenders of the status quo, or by undermining the confidence of the ruling class and by teaching techniques of revolt.

The question is not whether radicals or reactionaries should use the university. The question is, can the university deal with contemporary problems of social and ethical significance without abandoning its academic detachment? The rebels think it needs a social and ideological commitment. They seem to think that radical subject matter will automatically yield radical insight. In their minds, the academic and the political revolution are two prongs of an integrated action: political radicalism will liberate the academic professions from their sterility, and the liberation of the sciences will overcome the sterility of politics. They readily compare this new academic calling with Galileo's fight against theological censorship or with Marx's famous dictum: philosophers so far have explained the world in different ways, now the task is to change it.

It is not surprising that the defenders of old-style academe are often refugees from Hitler's Germany or specialists in Communist ideology; both know what it means to surrender science to political commitment. They hold that personal commitment must not interfere with scholarship, that scholarly research is meaningful in itself, and that it is not for them to determine the use of their discoveries (Marie Curie refused to take out a patent on radium, Robert Oppenheimer approved the bombing of Hiroshima). The partisan, on the other hand, holds that a science that does not serve a cause is an evasion of an intellectual's duty and a screen for the preservation of the establishment, that relevant science will always be on the side of the angels and liberate the minds from the brainwashing and sterilizing effects of traditional science.

FOR MANY DECADES, nothing of comparable importance has happened to the academic world. It is high time for the scholars to justify their place in society and to define the functions of ideology in the changes of

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contemporary civilization. There is no need to apologize for this debate; nor are we unprepared: have not philosophers warned men over and over again not to trust appearances? Have not historians shown again and again how heroes and villains changed places and how myths were defeated by countermyths? In the last 50 years sociologists have studied the relationship between social conditions and ideas. Taking cues from Marxism and existentialism, the sociology of knowledge has relativized all truths, and even physicists now admit that seeking after the truth is more blessed than having it. But if this is so and everybody is conscious of his own epistemological handicaps, what then is the hubbub about? Are the "new historians" cracking open doors? Are the committed philosophers merely returning to Plato?

A brief digression may help us to get the answer. The much-vaunted scientific outlook that postulates an objective, attainable truth was created in the 17th and 18th centuries and, as is well-known, has been called the philosophy of the Enlightenment. Many people still attribute this revolution to the so-called Renaissance, i.e., the philosophy of the 15th and 16th centuries; but the Renaissance and the Reformation were an age of doubt rather than of assertion, a reaction against medieval scholasticism which, as is well-known, held its own truth to be imperishable. As the Renaissance scholars had no answer to this claim, they declared those truths irrelevant and called for new sciences, using different methods. The knowledge they craved was poetic rather than theological, mystical rather than dialectical, rhetorical rather than logical. They called these studies "humanist" because they were partisans of Man and hoped with their methods to come closer to the truth about man. These methods, it must be well understood, were those of meticulous philological research, and in the process the scholars sharpened these weapons. So sure were they of the ultimate liberating effect of their studies that they would not prescribe any particular *parti pris* but trusted that their methodical doubt would lead to the desired goal. The liberating effect of the Renaissance sciences, therefore, was not owing to its partisanship on questions that had been relevant before, but resulted from a changed view of relevance. As is well-known, the result of this revolution was the dethronement of theology—then the queen of sciences—and the emergence of a new tribe of scholars: the free intelligentsia. I would suggest that the revolution on the campuses and in the academic associations may have a similar effect, and I would like to spell out its conditions.

First of all, interest has shifted from abstract problems to topical questions of the day. But Philosophy does not have anything to say about abortion; philosophers, insofar as they are citizens, may have very decided and well-founded opinions on such subjects as abortion, but propositions about the pertinent laws can have no higher standing in philosophy than propositions on any other substantive law, e.g., about stealing. The philosophy of law is many times removed from any specific code of law, and precisely because we now know that no values are absolute, we also know that every society will have its specific code of laws on stealing and abortion. The general propositions with which philosophy must deal do not lead to specific propositions on what is desirable. If Professor Morgenbesser has not learned it from Socrates, he might have learned from Sartre that virtue cannot be taught. It seems to me that he confuses two different issues: as a citizen he is dissatisfied with the stuff he has been teaching, but as a member of a philosophy department he wishes very much to save an institution that affords its members a highly respected and well-paid place in society. Trying to make philosophy "relevant" to the draft and to abortion law is like a rearguard maneuver on the part of theologians who vainly try to incorporate Copernicus into the Bible.

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A similar consideration applies to Professor Kampf's endeavor to replace Beowulf with ghetto language. I am far from denying that a study of ghetto language is timely, useful, interesting, and desirable. But I deny that it has any more dignity than the study of Beowulf. I happen to think that Beowulf is meaningful to the study of man, as is the Gilgamesh and the Gita. Perhaps we should give non-Western cultures as much attention as we give to the history of English literature; but I would object to the replacement of literature by something that is not literature! The academic treatment of cultural goods is designed to perpetuate a heritage into which black people wish to come. Professor Kampf is absolutely right in charging that this heritage seems "irrelevant" to working-class students, Negroes, and other "culturally deprived" categories—in fact to all novices, even to middle-class kids when they first enter a school room. The function of the school is precisely to acquaint the new generations with the achievements of former ones, making their cultural heritage relevant to them. If Professor Kampf wishes to destroy or abandon this heritage—again, he is not improving the curriculum but depriving the students of a curriculum. Instead of making the drab experience of a ghetto kid richer by opening the doors of past cultures to him, Professor Kampf, it seems, is rather pushing him back into the drabness of his own "relevant" experience. Relevant to what? The measure of relevance can only be defined in terms of the culture that provides for a man's living and circumscribes his functions in his environment. I am certain Professor Kampf is as much concerned about improving that environment as the next man, and about giving more people a chance to contribute toward its further development; but then he should help do that, instead of telling those who don't know it that our culture is not worth having.

A similar perversion of academic purposes is shaking the historians. More than other students of the humanities, they are aware of periodic "revisionisms": each generation debunks the heroes of its fathers, re-appraises their villains and their values, finds new problems relevant to its own understanding of mankind. As writers, the historians are highly conscious of the fact that they are the nation's myth-makers; for every legend of the past gives meaning to the actions of people in the present, and whoever can give meaning to a nation's institutions contributes to its self-understanding. It is one thing for a historian to recognize his social function and its inherent dangers; but it is quite a different thing to set out deliberately in search of "usable" myths and to indulge in historical pamphleteering. Much of what terms itself "radical history" is not better than Carlyle, but only functions in reverse: changing the good- and the bad-guy labels.

There are some radicals who write good history, like Genovese and Duberman; but they are not writing "radical history." Recently, the genre has come to be identified with maniacal witch-hunts in reverse, searching out a group of historical figures such as labor leaders or liberal intellectuals to test their stand on a question relevant today, such as war, or race: if they are found wanting, then they are rejected wholesale, no matter what their relevance may have been in their own day. This is not history but a one-dimensional, here-and-now–centered view of unusable past. A hundred years after Lincoln we can condemn him for not being an abolitionist of the first hour; but in that way we shall never understand how he was able to lead the nation toward abolition. "Radical history" often sounds like misunderstood and misapplied Marxism on the level of sophomore politics: everybody everywhere was motivated by base, material expectations, but in our own generation the right idea is also the moral decision that requires no further analysis. I recently asked a group of radical high-school teachers at what age they would introduce children to historical criticism. They answered that it

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was possible to teach all children that the U.S. started the war in Korea, that Lincoln did not want to liberate the slaves, etc. Someone observed that they were merely substituting one set of dogmatic statements for another; but the group failed to understand that my question had been a pedagogical one: when should children learn how to tell myths from facts? For them, the question was how to get a class of children to accept their set of facts as so many myths.

In the long run, I believe with Max Weber that a critical philosophy cannot be stopped arbitrarily like a taxicab. Scientists will always find the rewards of science in its pursuit, not in its results; the fame of Galileo does not rest on the laws he formulated but on the method he used to find them—the strict divorce of physics from metaphysics, of empirical findings from ulterior purposes. The so-called radicals seem to be abandoning his principle that science must be nobody's handmaiden. In their reversal of the order of research and findings, they are rejecting the foundations on which modern civilization has rested since the 17th century.

The formula "history for the future" is either a thoughtless phrase or it expresses the desire to make history "usable" in a way that defies scholarship. One historian who is a scholar and a friend of the New Left recently had the courage to disengage himself from such attempts. In *The Uncompleted Past* Professor Martin Duberman first repudiates his useful belief that history "could help us to understand not only how we got where we are, but also where we want to go and how to get there." But on the last page of his book he comes to the conclusion that "there cannot be a New History . . . that is, a history researched, written, and taught in such a way as to aid directly in the eradication of social ills," and he advises anybody interested in social action to abandon history. He himself took to writing plays.

I don't know what caused Mr. Duberman to disclaim his disclaimer in a letter to the *New York Times,* and I disagree completely with the view of history that is implied in his book; but I am interested in the philosophical attitude that brought him to this impasse. The university never had any meaning for him, and whatever it may have had for others has been lost. It is a meeting place for fellows who talk to each other and are engrossed in their own importance. The academic pastime of publishing papers on subjects of no great relevance also has lost the meaning it may have had at one time: it then was part of a gentleman's education that he could pretend to be a scholar. This education set off the university-educated against the non-leisure classes. The rigid discipline of learning, so to speak, had taken the place of jousting as a mark of distinction entitling a man to receive the services of those who had not been so educated.

This elite education, however, makes no sense any longer—be it because soon up to 50 percent of the relevant age group will go to college and therefore by definition the college-educated can no longer be called an elite, be it that the education they receive in college no longer produces either scholars or gentlemen. Once "irrelevance" of the subject matter was a virtue because a gentleman's studies need not lead to a professional career. Now studies are doubly irrelevant because they secure neither class distinction nor useful professional knowledge. The only class distinction studies do perpetuate is that of the liberal arts community itself, which has become entirely parasitical.

What is at stake, therefore, is not the relevance of science but the place of the university in post-capitalist society. Students want to know what they are studying for and teachers doubt their calling if they cannot justify their courses in the eyes of their students. Neither teachers nor students can look upon themselves any longer as a community of select people. To put it more brutally: they cannot assume that what they are doing for themselves also is for the best of

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society. Their science itself, Professor Duberman found to his distress, does not give the answer to the question what it is good for, and he had the honesty to admit that science will not allow extraneous interests to give it a purpose. But from his despair I draw comfort. It is plain that the crisis is not in the sciences themselves but in the educational aims society is trying to impose on the university. Society is sick; it does not know what to ask of its young people; it needs new attitudes and new institutions. It does not need a new science.

Now in contrast to Professor Duberman I believe that there is more revolutionary ferment in the humanities than meets the naked eye. History does teach us how human societies behave in crises; it traces traditions of the new and shows man's constant readiness for new challenges; it also shows the limitations of power (of both, power for good and power for evil); it reveals the range of human experience, which encompasses things we wish to preserve as well as the wish to change things. The liberal arts are dealing with these facets of human existence in many ways, and no one can tell beforehand whether one line of research rather than the other may lead to an important new insight.

The community of scholars must not allow anybody to intimidate them with the terroristic injunction to be "relevant." Science, research, and studies can be relevant in many ways, some of which may be unexpected. The nonacademic world may discover at a later date that some results also were useful and relevant to its concerns. But if "relevance" and usefulness were to be the criterion of academic studies, then the universities would soon teach only what the recruiting agents of industrial and governmental employers recommend. It may come to that, but then let us scholars get an honest divorce from the professional schools and withdraw to a place where we can guarantee to ourselves the freedom to teach and to our students the freedom to learn.

WE MUST REDEFINE the function of the university and restructure it so as to make room for scholars, for teachers, and for trainers of professionals; that may mean a major revolution in American education. It may also imply a rethinking of what is the place of the scholar in society. Under the old elite definition he was supposed to be a generalist, and his teaching was to produce generalists who were entitled to pronounce themselves on any subject, especially politics. Today the scholar must be more modest. When he speaks out on political matters he cannot expect to be heard with the respect due to his titles, but only on the merits of the case he presents. The bricklayer never claims to be a better judge of public affairs because he knows bricks; the scholar is often tempted to claim superior insight because he has been trained in the art of thinking and because he has educated the governing elite; the recent trend toward mandarin government has brought him invitations to sit on boards, to advise the government and consult with influential people, or to speak out on public issues *as a scholar*. Once upon a time the conservatives looked to the university as the oracle of the status quo. Today the Left has espoused the myth that scholars are better citizens or better informed or better able to judge. It has gone one step further: it has asked the scholars to sign petitions, not as private persons or respected citizens but as members of academic institutions, or even to commit those institutions to certain protest actions.

There are two fallacies in such attempts: first, the elitist claim that a group of book worms is somehow better qualified than the crew of a ship or the employees of a baking company to voice a point of view; second, that the university as such can have a view transcending the views of its individual denizens. It is one thing to record that all the members of an entire staff of an institution have subscribed to some project as individual citizens; it is quite another thing for them to commit the institution, thereby precluding

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possible dissent by other individuals. Such a procedure goes against the spirit of the university and presses the individual professor into a collective of limited moral responsibility. Instead of acting as a citizen where citizen action and citizen decision is required, he marches behind the banner of his institution, like the old guild masters of Nuremberg.

By a strange paradox, this abandonment of personal responsibility occurs at precisely the moment when the scholar seems to be near the fulfillment of Plato's dream: he now stands by the side of the policy-maker and is much in demand in industry and community. Just at this moment he doubts his "relevance" and his calling; but instead of blaming himself he projects the blame on his science or on the academy. Instead of making himself relevant and of assuming the burden history has cast upon him, he tries to impose some imagined relevance on his occupation. Confronted with a similar failure of nerve, Max Weber growled, "A course in aesthetics does not tell why there are works of art." A. N. Whitehead would have spoken of the "fallacy of misplaced concreteness," and Marx would simply have called it a fetishistic view of science, pretending an abstraction can do what must be done by man.

The radical attack on the university is the result of two complementary confusions: the university is mistaken for a miniature of society or for some part of it that can be "liberated"; and a set of doctrines is mistaken for the process of studying and challenging. Hence the absurd notion that to make the university more responsive to changes in the society, it suffices to abolish disinterested research and independent curricula. The insurgents quite naively admit that they are not interested in a reform of the university—which everybody agrees is necessary—but want to suppress science as we have known it. In places like Berlin they already think of "liberated areas in the university" as revolutionary bastions for guerrilla actions in the city. There the scholars have reacted with a strike action and, at least momentarily, restored the university to its proper function—a haven for ideas that must be defended at all costs by scholars of whatever persuasion. Some civil-libertarians these days are insensitive to the danger that, having lost its innocence, the university may fall under pressures from all sides and be more vulnerable to a second wave of McCarthyism. They think it is more important to express an opinion now and to get the university behind them than to protect its future. But once the university allows itself to become polarized it will be overrun by the barbarians.

It is therefore a matter of deep concern to me that scholars separate their actions as citizens from their interest in the university and that they do not confuse the reform of the university with the abolition of its freedom. I also wonder why scholars on the Left have so little confidence in the revolutionary effect of autonomous research. Unless the independent scholar is given absolute freedom to follow his own sense of discovery wherever it beckons him, even into fields that may appear useless and irrelevant to others, and even into fields that may appear harmful to a majority. Unless the scholar defends his right to withdraw into the ivory tower or to come out of it at his own choosing, he may find himself in the position of a servant to the ruler of the day. Instead of being the philosopher at the king's side, he might then sit as the fool at his feet.

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Martin Jay

Metapolitics of Utopianism

THE RISE of Herbert Marcuse from the relative obscurity of his first 65 years to a position as one of the media's favorite seducers of the young has not been without its cost. Through what the French, in a delightful phrase, call *"la drugstorisation de Marcuse,"* he has himself become something of a commodity. No article on the New Left is complete without a ritual mention of his name; no discussion of the "counter culture" dares ignore his message of liberation. By and large ignored, however, are the roots of his arguments, which are too deeply embedded in a tradition alien to the thinking of most Americans to make painless comprehension likely. It is far easier, after all, to read the unfortunate essay on "Repressive Tolerance" than to wrestle with the conceptual subtleties and stylistic impenetrability of *Reason and Revolution.* As a result, Marcuse is still to a considerable extent *Cet Inconnu,* as the French journal *La Nef* subtitled its recent issue devoted to him.[1] Although we cannot here undertake a complete exploration of the foundation of his thought, we can look into the one aspect of it that has recently come to the fore: its utopianism.

Marxist theory has steadfastly refused to offer a blueprint for postcapitalist society. The historicist strain in Marx's own thinking was always in tension with his implicit philosophical anthropology. Occasional attempts by his successors to describe "Socialist Man" have usually been thwarted by the recognition that he will have to define himself in a process of self-creation that cannot be predicted in advance. Few Marxist or neo-Marxist thinkers have been as sensitive to this historicist ban on positing a normative human nature as those of the so-called Frankfurt school of the Institut für Sozialforschung, with which Marcuse was associated during the 1930s. The Institut's reluctance to suggest anything that might be taken as a universal view of man's essence prevented it from accepting without reservation the anthropological implications of Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* when these were recovered in the early '30s. It is not insignificant that Theodor W. Adorno, who until his untimely death last summer was the Institut's director, chose music, the most unrepresentational of aesthetic modes, as the medium through which to examine bourgeois culture for traces of its transcendent negation. In recent years, Max Horkheimer, who is more responsible than anyone else for the genesis of the Institut's "Critical Theory," has come to believe that this refusal to picture the "other" society beyond capitalism is not unrelated to the Jewish ban on naming or describing God.

Whatever the source of the taboo, of the major figures connected with the Frankfurt school only Marcuse has dared in recent years to break it. He has tried to speak the unspeakable, in an increasingly urgent effort to reintroduce a utopian cast to socialist theory. *Eros and Civilization* was his first attempt to outline the contours of the society beyond repressive domination. The *Essay on Liberation* goes even further in explicitly stating the need for a new philo-

[1] "Marcuse: Cet Inconnu," *La Nef* (Paris), January–February 1969.

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sophical anthropology, a frankly "biological foundation" for socialism. The desired transition, he argues, is from Marx to Fourier, from realism to surrealism.[2] The failure of socialism, he seems to be saying, has been a failure of imagination.

By consciously donning the utopian mantle, Marcuse has invited the scorn of "realists" in both the socialist and capitalist camps. By doing so, he has nevertheless helped give substance and direction to the inchoate yearnings of those dissatisfied with what they see as the present Hobson's Choice of authoritarian socialism or repressive advanced capitalism. While his critiques of both these current societies are well-known, his utopian alternative has been largely ignored. Only its psychoanalytic elements—the goal of a society freed from historically-grounded "surplus repression" and the "performance principle" (a kind of generalized Protestant ethic)—have been discussed with any rigor. Far less attention has been paid to its philosophical sources. Only by examining these can the political implications of Marcuse's vision be adequately understood.

Those familiar solely with Marcuse's writings in English are often surprised to learn that, before joining the Institut in Frankfurt in 1932, he spent several years with Martin Heidegger at Freiburg. During this period, he attempted to reconcile Heidegger's existential phenomenology with historical materialism,[3] anticipating in a sense what Merleau-Ponty and Sartre were to try to do after the war. The details of his attempt need not concern us now.[4] It is important to note for our purposes that, as Alfred Schmidt has suggested, Marxism served him as a "positive philosophy" answering Heidegger's question, "What is authentic existence and how is authentic existence possible?" To Marcuse, man can exist authentically only by performing radical deeds, only by engaging in self-creating *praxis*. Man is only man as autonomous subject, never as contingent predicate. The Marxist "fundamental situation" (*Grundsituation*), he argued, is that in which the historically-conscious man performs radical acts in order to live authentically.

Although he abandoned much of Heidegger's terminology and moved away from his ontological approach to history during his tenure with the Institut, Marcuse has never fully relinquished his conviction that the free man is the man who can create himself through radical *praxis*. (One might add that Heidegger's influence has persisted in another way as well. Marcuse's attitude toward technology—he has been accused of being everything from a romantic Luddite to a technological determinist—owes much to Heidegger's hostility to the technological logos which he interpreted as a falling away from the basic insights of the pre-Socratics, a process that began centuries before technology itself achieved its domination over nature and man. In *One-dimensional Man*,[5] Marcuse openly appropriates a passage from Heidegger's *Holzwege* to attack the "technological a priori.")

IT WOULD BE a grave error to dismiss Marcuse as an existentialist decked out in Marxist trappings, as some of his critics on the Left have done. Whatever his indebtedness to Heidegger, he has never abandoned his conviction in the validity of values beyond experience. Indeed, among his most devastating critiques is an attack on the antinormative political existentialism of the pro-Nazi

[2] Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 22.

[3] See, e.g., Herbert Marcuse, "Beiträge zu einer Phänomenologie des Historischen Materialismus," *Philosophische Hefte*, I:1(1928).

[4] For a discussion of the problem, see Alfred Schmidt, "Existential-Ontologie und historischer Materialismus bei Herbert Marcuse," in *Antworten auf Herbert Marcuse*, Jürgen Habermas, ed. (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1968).

[5] Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 153–54.

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political philosopher Carl Schmitt.[6] (There is, of course, no necessary connection between the philosophical positions collectively known as Existentialist and their political counterpart, although in the sad case of Heidegger his Nazi sympathies cannot be totally dissociated from his philosophy.) If there is a leftist parallel to Schmitt and his decisionism, it can be found in those who would collapse theory into an unmediated *praxis*. The most recent manifestation of this basically anarchistic position is the Weatherman faction of the SDS. Although Marcuse has always warned against the complete separation of theory and *praxis,* at no time has he advocated action as sufficient in itself. The goal may be the unity of thought and action, but at this moment in historical time, their relationship is necessarily problematical. To declare their unity as already existing is to fall prey to ideology. It is only as a utopian hope that the coordination of self-creating action and rational theory should be understood in Marcuse's work.

If one element of his utopian vision is a stress on radical *praxis* as authentic behavior, which can perhaps be derived from his connection with Heidegger, there is another and more important strain. Here his distance from all types of existentialism is evident. This is especially clear when compared with the position taken by Sartre in one of the classic existentialist texts, *Being and Nothingness*. The relevant issue here is the possibility of the reconciliation of opposites, which anyone who works within a Hegelian framework must confront. In *Being and Nothingness,* the dialectic of opposing forces remains inevitably truncated: the redeeming power of synthesis is ultimately denied as a possible end to the historical process. The *pour-soi* and *en-soi,* Sartre's variation on the theme of subject and object, cannot be reconciled. "Conflict," he writes, "is the original meaning of being-for-others."[7] The familiar aphorism from *No Exit* makes the same point: *"L'Enfer, c'est les autres."* Here, Marcuse's former colleagues at the Institut für Sozialforschung, Horkheimer and Adorno, reluctantly reach similar conclusions in their later work. *Negative Dialektik,* Adorno's last great work, stresses non-identity and the importance of negation as the last refuge of freedom. "The totality," he wrote elsewhere, "is the untrue." And in the 1960s, Horkheimer returned to his early interest in Schopenhauer and a pessimistic denial that the world can be made rational.

Marcuse, however, disagrees both with the gloomy reduction of man to a "useless passion" (in *Being and Nothingness*) and with the stress on the non-identity of subject and object in the work of the other leading figures of the Frankfurt school. Although he is often taken to task for his "pessimism," he maintains a belief, expressed in all his works, that true reconciliation, however frustrated in the false harmony of contemporary society, is indeed a possibility. This, of course, is not to say that he believes the synthesis has already been achieved, as Hegelians of the Right have always assumed. Firmly grounded in the Marxist tradition, Marcuse is quick to point out that social conditions, behind the facade of one-dimensionality, are still fundamentally contradictory and antagonistic. Class conflict may not be the form in which contradiction now manifests itself, but no universal class has emerged in which all antagonisms have been dialectically resolved. Integration, as he has used it, doesn't mean true harmony. On the other hand, he does believe that, for the first time, preconditions do exist—created paradoxically by the technology whose other effects he so dislikes—which make the prospects for reconciliation favorable. With the end of scarcity, so runs the familiar argument in *Eros and Civilization,* man's

[6] Herbert Marcuse, "The Struggle Against Liberalism in the Totalitarian View of the State," in *Negations,* by Marcuse, transl. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), pp. 31–42.

[7] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* transl. Hazel Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1956), p. 364.

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need to repress himself for the sake of productive work is no longer binding. Utopian possibilities are no longer chimerical.

What then does Marcuse mean by reconciliation? What is this true harmony he so fervently seeks? Here more than anywhere else he reveals his roots in the German Idealist tradition. One might even venture the observation that he has succumbed to the lure of Greece and its alleged cultural serenity which had such an enormous influence on German philosophy during its classical period, as E. M. Butler has shown in her masterful *The Tyranny of Greece over Germany*. The image of the Greeks, which was so powerful among the German philosophers, was not that of a nation of tragedy writers, but rather that of a people in a state of pre-alienated wholeness which Winckelmann had introduced to the German mind in the 18th century.

In his essay on "Philosophy and Critical Theory," which first appeared in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* in 1937, Marcuse wrote:

> Under the name of reason it [philosophy] conceived the idea of an authentic Being in which all significant antitheses (of subject and object, essence and appearance, thought and being) were reconciled. Connected with this idea was the conviction that what exists is not immediately and already rational but must rather be brought to reason. . . . At its highest level, as authentic reality, the world no longer stands opposed to the rational thought of men as mere material objectivity. Rather, it is now comprehended by thought and defined as a concept [Begriff]. That is, the external, antithetical character of material objectivity is overcome in a process through which the identity of subject and object is established as the rational, conceptual structure that is common to both.[8]

HERE THEN is the belief that identity between thought and being—and Marcuse clearly means being-in-the-world, social relations—can be established on the basis of a shared rationality. At no time, however, does he imply that the individual should be sacrificed to the whole in the name of a hypostatized objective rationality. In his article on hedonism written for the *Zeitschrift* in 1938, he stresses the function of hedonistic philosophies in preserving the claim of personal human happiness against the demands of overarching totalities such as the state. Here the stress on sensual gratification, which was developed in his postwar work on Freud, exists in embryo. Marcuse has, however, always been careful to avoid advocating simple sexual freedom as the answer to social repression, in the way Wilhelm Reich occasionally did. "The bogey of the unchained voluptuary," he wrote, "who would abandon himself only to his sensual wants is rooted in the separation of intellectual from material productive forces and the separation of the labor process from the process of consumption. Overcoming this separation belongs to the preconditions of freedom." [9] The end of the dichotomy between internalized, spiritualized culture and material, sensual activity in the "real" world is thus part of his utopian vision. The stress here on reconciling production and consumption foreshadows his later use of Schiller's "play drive" in *Eros and Civilization*. Art and technology must ultimately converge; the logos of gratification must be joined with a technology freed from its project of domination.

The driving impetus in Marcuse's thinking toward harmony is further demonstrated in his treatment of time. In *Eros and Civilization,* he stresses the function of memory, of "re-membering" that which is asunder, as a vehicle of liberation. To forget is to forgive the injustices of the past. "From the myth of Orpheus to the novel of Proust," he argues, "happiness and freedom have been linked with the idea of the recapture of time. . . .

[8] Marcuse, *Negations,* pp. 135–36.

[9] Marcuse, *Negations,* p. 198.

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remembrance alone provides the joy without the anxiety over its passing and thus gives it an otherwise impossible duration. Time loses its power when remembrance redeems the past." [10] And in his later essay, "Progress and Freud's Theory of Instincts," he outlines more explicitly a utopian idea of temporality. "Time would not seem linear, as a perpetual line or rising curve, but cyclical, as the return contained in Nietzsche's idea of the 'perpetuity of pleasure.' " [11]

There is more than a little of the tyranny of Greece, or at least the Greek idea of cyclical time, in all of this, not to mention the influence of one of Marcuse's colleagues, Walter Benjamin. In his "Theses on the Philosophy of History," [12] Benjamin developed the ideal of *"Jetztzeit"* (now-time) as a mystical explosion in the continuum of history, a kind of Messianic time qualitatively different from the empty, linear, unfulfilled temporal experience of ordinary men. Marcuse has always been fond of quoting Benjamin's observation that in 1830 the revolutionaries of Paris shot at public clocks to make time stop. The implications of this way of thinking would seem blatantly eschatological. But Marcuse, when questioned on this point, has denied any eschatological intentions. Short of nuclear disaster, he has said, history will go on. And yet, it would go on very differently than it has been experienced until now. Noticeably absent would be conflict, strife, and striving—in short, such attributes that have characterized Western history for millennia. In his own words, Marcuse desires the "pacification of existence." Gratification and sensual receptivity are the traits of his new aestheticism. Unlike Marx, or at least the mature Marx, Marcuse believes labor can be abolished. Because Marx was more pessimistic on this point, he never believed that the complete identity of the production and consumption processes could be achieved. Indeed, Marx did not even fully accept the Hegelian notion of identity of subject and object to which Marcuse seems to have returned.[13]

The only place in his writings where Marcuse displays similar caution is in his critique of Norman O. Brown whose mysticism demands the total negation of the *principium individuationis*. ". . . Eros lives in the division and boundary between subject and object, man and nature," Marcuse admonishes Brown, ". . . the unity of subject and object is a hallmark of absolute idealism; however, even Hegel retained the tension between the two, the distinction" (in *Negations*, p. 238). Elsewhere, he supports an identity theory which, though demanding the preservation of the individual, is scarcely less utopian than Brown's.

It is not significant that Bloch, whose animistic belief in the resurrection of a new natural subject marks him as a leading identity theorist, embraced Marcuse at a conference in Yugoslavia in 1968 and welcomed him back to the ranks of the utopian optimists of the 1920s. Indeed, it would be tempting to say that Marcuse has surrendered to what Freud called the "Nirvana Principle," the yearning for the end of tension that is life, if Marcuse were not so sure that life without tension is a possibility.[14]

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[10] Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 213.

[11] Herbert Marcuse, *Five Lectures*, transl. Jeremy J. Shapiro and Shierry M. Weber (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 41.

[12] Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, transl. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), p. 263.

[13] For a discussion of this problem in Marx, see Alfred Schmidt, *Der Begriff der Natur in der Lehre von Marx* (Frankfurt a.M.: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1962).

[14] In *Eros and Civilization* (p. 214), Marcuse writes, "The death instinct operates under the Nirvana principle: it tends toward the state of 'constant gratification' where no tension is felt. . . . If the instinct's basic objective is not the termination of life but of pain—the absence of tension—then, paradoxically, in terms of the instinct, the conflict between life and death is the more reduced the closer life approximates the state of

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These then are the two strains in Marcuse's vision of the liberated society: the first, the stress on radical action, on the deed, on self-creation as the only mode of authentic being; the second, the unity of opposites, the true harmony of pacified existence, the end of conflict and contradiction. The one theme is basically active, one might even say Promethean, to use Marx's favorite metaphor; the other is rather passive, Orphic in the sense Marcuse interprets Orpheus *in Eros and Civilization,* as the singer of joy and fulfillment. And both strains, he has cogently argued, are denied and frustrated in the contemporary world of repressive capitalism and authoritarian socialism.

Whether or not the two strains are compatible is a problem Marcuse doesn't seem to have worked out in any detail. It may be said that radical *praxis* is merely the means of achieving the revolutionary breakthrough leading to the pacification of existence. This doesn't work, however, because of Marcuse's insistence that self-creating action is the only truly authentic mode of being. Another possible solution would be to divide his work into that of an "early" and a "late" Marcuse, as is sometimes done for Marx, with the result that a Heideggerian Marcuse is somehow supplanted by a Hegelianized one under the influence of Horkheimer and the Institut. Besides being too schematic, this solution fails to do justice to the mixture of both strains in his work. It is perhaps best to leave this problem by saying that Marcuse, as so many other thinkers of stature, has unresolved tensions in his thought. As to be expected, the political implications which can be drawn from these conflicting tendencies are no simpler. It is to these that we now turn.

IN HIS TREATMENT of Heidegger's concept of authentic existence, Marcuse was critical of the abstract, undialectical quality of his teacher's idea of history. Not everyone, he argued, was in the position to perform the radical acts constituting authentic behavior. At this stage in man's development, Marcuse claimed, only the proletariat is the true actor on the historical stage because of its crucial role in the production process. To ignore the importance of class differences would be to retreat into idealism. Heidegger's indifference to the real course of history was not unrelated to the *völkisch* ideology of the national *Gemeinschaft* transcending social contradictions.

Since 1928 much, of course, has happened to emasculate the revolutionary potential of the working class, especially in the United States of America to which Marcuse fled in 1934. To the consternation of those who still romanticize the proletariat, he was among the first to face the implications of its integration. Although he has recently seen evidence of cracks in the one-dimensionality of the system in student protest and the rumblings of what Marx would have dismissed as the *Lumpenproletariat,* at no time has he mistaken these forces for a new proletariat or a new historical subject. As a result, he has been the frequent target of other theorists on the Left who see the stirring of new "negative" forces in society, such as the alienated "new working class" of white-collar workers and technicians. Whoever may be right, it is important to note that Marcuse has always identified the doers of the authentic deed with a specific historical group; to ignore the historical element in his "existentialist" stress on *praxis* is to falsify his analysis. Although Marcuse has often been accused of anarchism—such disparate thinkers as Hans Heinz Holz and George Lichtheim have leveled this charge against him [15]—and if indeed

gratification. . . . As suffering and want recede, the Nirvana principle may become reconciled with the reality principle. The unconscious attraction that draws the instincts back to an 'earlier state' would be affectively counteracted by the desirability of the attained state of life."

[15] Hans Heinz Holz, *Utopie und Anarchismus* (Cologne: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1968). See also George Lichtheim, "From Marx to Hegel: Reflections on

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there is an anarchistic element in his work in the healthy sense of distrusting rigid organizations, it would be a grave error to interpret him as an advocate of indiscriminate activism or political decisionism. That wing of the student movement which takes his name as a justification for such activity is misapplying his teachings, at least insofar as they neglect his stress on present historical possibilities.

Yet there is a persistent interpretation of Marcuse on just this level. If the so-called existentialist element in his utopian vision ought not to be interpreted as a justification for the indeterminate negation of the system, what of the other central theme in his work, the yearning for harmony and reconciliation of dialectical contradictions? Here the implications are far more problematical. In his analysis of Marcuse's aesthetics,[16] Herbert Read has argued that the achievement of a rational society would not end the need for art, as Marcuse has implied. If in our own irrational society art provides *une promesse de bonheur,* a promise of unfulfilled happiness, as Marcuse has argued, there is no necessary reason to suppose that a new society, however rational, would satisfy all of man's needs or end all his fears. Above all, the mystery of death and the arbitrariness of suffering would make human existence a continuing subject for the aesthetic imagination. The eternal return is forever bisected by the linear time of mortal men who are born and must ultimately die.

If Marcuse is too quick to assume art would be *aufgehoben* in a rational society, so too—and this is a vitally important point—is he overly hasty in assuming politics would be overcome in a grand synthesis of differences. The vaunted American system of pluralistic politics may indeed be a mask for manipulation and special interests, as he has always argued, yet pluralism as such is the very essence of politics. The belief that political conflict is an epiphenomenon of economic and social contradictions is a fallacy that finally ought to be laid to rest. What the Czechs were in part trying to say, before they lost the chance to say anything at all, was that politics in the sense of readjusting priorities and working through the competition for power doesn't end when an economy is socialized. Furthermore, the expectation that international tension will end when the entire world becomes socialist is a hope that drowned in the waters of the Ussuri River last year to the sound of Russian and Chinese guns.

Thus, in positing a utopia of identity in which all contradictions are overcome, Marcuse displays that basic hostility to politics which has been the curse of too many German thinkers for too many years. Its effects spill over into the only type of political action he sanctions today: the Great Refusal, a complete rejection of the mechanics of political change presented by the system. Although in large measure this is a response to the sadly true observation that the system all too often fails to do what it promises, it is also a reflection of his more basic rejection of politics as such. The inevitable result of this attitude, if apolitical quietism is to be avoided, is what the French call *une politique du pire* based on the apocalyptic hope that out of total chaos will come total change. Metapolitics rather than true political activity becomes the only authentic mode of revolutionary behavior. In the end it is perhaps all reducible to that "aestheticization" of politics against which Walter Benjamin so earnestly warned (see *Illuminations,* p. 244).

Paradoxically, the radical optimism of Marcuse's utopian vision is the dialectical counterpart of that resignation about the possibilities for change within or growing out of the system which has earned him so much abuse from liberals and the orthodox Left.

Georg Lukacs, T. W. Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse," *Triquarterly,* Spring 1968.

[16] Herbert Read, "Rational Society and Irrational Art," *The Critical Spirit: Essays in Honor of Herbert Marcuse,* Kurt Wolff and Barrington Moore, Jr., eds. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967).

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It is, therefore, ironic that the existentialist strain in Marcuse's thinking, sometimes cited as the source of his anarchistic impulses, is less influential in promoting antipolitical politics than is the idealist strain. It is almost as if Marcuse, in his belief that the metapolitical utopia is just around the corner, has forgotten his tempering of the ahistorical element in Heidegger's thinking. Reifying the status quo and rejecting any medium of real change except the sudden and total collapse of the system is to jump out of history. It is no accident that in his recent works Marcuse has taken more and more to quoting that other great defector from the mundane course of history, Friedrich Nietzsche.

Perhaps the most unhistorical element in his work is Marcuse's notion that the abolition of labor and its replacement by play—in Schiller's sense of unrepressed sensuousness reconciled with the "order of freedom"—would be the hallmark of the new age. The end of scarcity, by no means as easily accomplished as he believes, is a thin reed on which to base the end of social, political, and psychological contradictions. Here, curiously, Marcuse shows himself both beyond Marx and beholden to him. He transcends Marx's relatively cautious stance, as mentioned before, by arguing that labor can indeed be abolished. Yet, by giving so much weight to that abolition, he reveals his indebtedness to Marx's conviction that labor is the basic human life activity. Play, it might be argued, is really on the same conceptual axis as labor, if at the other end.[17]

Marcuse's interpretation of Hegel is colored by his acceptance of the Marxist centrality of labor. In *Reason and Revolution* he wrote: "The concept of labor is not peripheral in Hegel's system, but is the central notion through which he conceives the development of society."[18] What Marcuse was perhaps forgetting in his desire to demonstrate the closeness of Marx and Hegel has recently been shown by the most gifted second-generation student of the Frankfurt school, Jürgen Habermas. Labor, Habermas has argued in his article "Arbeit und Interaktion,"[19] was not the only category of self-creation in Hegel's thinking. An alternative mode existed in symbolically mediated interaction, i.e., in language and expressive gestures, which at least in his early work Hegel did not see as identical with the dialectic of labor. To Marcuse, however, Hegel was saying that, "Language . . . makes it possible for an individual to take a conscious position *against* his fellows and to assert his needs and desires against those of the other individuals. The resulting antagonisms are integrated through the process of labor, which also becomes the decisive force for the development of culture."[20] Thus, in Marcuse's thinking, the problems of symbolic interaction are contained within the larger framework of the dialectic of labor and the production process. This permits him to give so much emphasis to the utopian possi-

[17] When Marcuse first stressed the ontological centrality of labor in one of his early Heideggerian essays, his attitude toward play was less favorable than in *Eros and Civilization*. In play, he argued, the sway of the objective world over the free subject is suspended. Thus, unlike labor, play produces no permanent objectifications. It has no essential duration, existing in the "inbetween" separating true *praxis*. Nor does it express man's essentially historical nature. "First and only in labor," he wrote, "does man become historically real and win his specific place in historical occurrence." ("Über die philosophischen Grundlagen des Wirtschaftswissenschaftlichen Arbeitsbegriffs," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* [69: 3] June 1933, p. 279.) Using his own reasoning against him, it might therefore be argued that his recent praise of play as a superior alternative to labor indicates an ahistorical strain in his thinking. I think it is more important to note that Marcuse's discovery of *Homo Ludens* in his recent work occurred against the background of his life-long conviction of the ontological importance of labor. This allows him to see play as resolving contradictions, as he once argued labor did, rather than creating new ones, as is the case when play is understood as related to what Habermas calls "symbolically-mediated interaction."

[18] Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 78.

[19] Jürgen Habermas, *Technik und Wissenschaft als "Ideologie"* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1968).

[20] Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*, p. 75.

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bilities liberated by the abolition of human toil. What he therefore neglects to note is that, as Habermas has put it, "Freedom from hunger and toil doesn't necessarily converge with freedom from slavery and degradation, because an automatically developmental connection between labor and interaction doesn't exist." [21]

The link between Marcuse's hostility toward politics and his neglect of the problem of symbolic interaction should not be missed. As Hannah Arendt,[22] among others, has so often pointed out, speech and political *praxis* are inseparable. The abolition of labor, even if it were as easily attained as Marcuse thinks it is, would therefore not put an end to all contradictions. Symbolic interaction and the politics with which it is so intimately tied would continue to express the sedimented antagonisms of the past. The question of nationalism, for example, is likely to frustrate hopes for a reconciliation of particular and universal interests in the future, as were frustrated expectations of an international proletariat in the past. And, of course, at the center of the national question is the irreducible fact of linguistic differences. This is a reality Marcuse's utopianism fails to acknowledge, thus allowing him to maintain an implicit faith in the possibility of a Benjamin-like "explosion in the continuum of history." The political imperative that follows from all of this is the cul-de-sac of apocalyptic metapolitics, which is really no politics at all.

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[21] Habermas, *Technik und Wissenschaft als "Ideologie,"* p. 46.
[22] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 155–61.

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Bogdan Denitch

Is There a "New Working Class"?

A Brief Note on a Large Question

MASS UNIVERSITY EDUCATION, in the advanced industrial countries,[1] is leading to a shift in the function and character of university-educated personnel. From an elite education for sons of notables preparing to assume leading roles, there is a turn to vocational training and, also, to an imprecise rite of passage designed to prepare technicians and white-collar workers for a bureaucratized economy. This trend has reduced many of the old-style professionals to paid employees of institutions. The process has advanced farthest in the United States,[2] though a number of factors make awareness of it clearer in France and some East European countries. It is important to distinguish between the effect of *mass* university education, primarily a post-World War II phenomenon, and the older discontent of *unemployed* university graduates centered on status demands and often associated with right-wing movements.

The post-World War II expansion of universities has coincided with a growing demand for university graduates. Relatively high salaries and social mobility obtained through university education disguise their real loss of power and status. Students of working-class or lower-middle-class origin tend to accept the university environment, since for them it does represent a major chance for social advance. But with them, too, promise evoked by higher education clashes with the result, which is often work-compartmentalized to a degree that an older generation of university graduates would find unrecognizable. Two results follow. Leaving the university after graduation comes to seem increasingly unattractive, since meaningful work *in terms of their own education,* particularly for students of the social sciences and humanities, is hard to find. And a fertile ground is created for hostility toward a society that seems incapable of assuring satisfying work even to university graduates.

This discontent is most clearly articulated in the social sciences and humanities, where the training one gets—the ability to critically analyze institutions and ideologies—has little relationship to the work one will end up doing. For what can one do today with an

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[1] Recent UNESCO figures on the number of students per 10,000 inhabitants indicate that after the U.S. and U.S.S.R., both East and West European countries are among those with a relatively large number of students:

U.S.A.:	284	Yugoslavia:	105
U.S.S.R.:	183	France:	104
Canada:	164	Bulgaria:	101
Netherlands:	121	Denmark:	100
Australia:	116	Czechoslovakia:	96
Japan:	116		

That this is a matter of social policy, more than of the general level of industrialization and ability to absorb university-trained personnel, is underlined by the figures for some other developed countries:

West Germany:	44	East Germany:	62
Italy:	58	Switzerland:	55

[2] Martin Trow, "Reflections on the Transition from Mass to Universal Higher Education," *Daedalus,* Winter 1970, pp. 1–2. ". . . this sprawling system of some 2,500 colleges and universities enrolls over 40 per cent of the age grade, over 50 per cent of all high school graduates and those proportions are steadily rising. In some large states like California, where roughly 80 per cent of high school graduates go on to some form of higher education, our system of higher education begins to be very nearly universal."

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undergraduate degree in the social sciences or the humanities? The better-situated students in those disciplines increasingly accept the fact that their undergraduate degree is only a prerequisite for entering graduate schools. Yet, while graduate school postpones entry into the job market, it also increases the gap between the training one gets and the work one will do; not all graduate students, after all, choose academic careers.

II

THIS CHANGE in the role of universities reflects new needs of the economy: needs for increasing numbers of salaried people with technical and bureaucratic skills who will be dependent on institutions in which they hold no power. It is a process that can be observed in advanced industrialized societies, both East and West. Whole generations trained to think in terms of societal issues are offered roles as powerless, if well-paid, employees. Those with specific skills find their work compartmentalized and routinized. The shift in the authority of engineers and skilled scientists in industry also reduces them to a *new* highly-trained working class.[3]

One root of student discontent lies in this shift of role. Students increasingly resent the fact that modern society seems incapable of providing meaningful work and participation in decision-making. Far from temporary, the wave of student radicalism is neither localized in respect to political issues (an end to the Vietnam War might not reduce student rebellion in the U.S.) nor centered on the organization of universities. Nor is it in essence rooted in a conflict of generations. It represents instead the inchoate early struggles of "a class in the process of becoming," mostly unaware of its own needs and acting archaically or irrationally. Students have sometimes been called neo-Luddites. We should remember that the Luddites were an anachronistic expression of a then *new* working class in the process of being formed out of the old crafts; they were striking out in a socially irrelevant way at symbols of their *new* status marking the end of their old role. I would like to suggest in a crude parallel that the direction of student discontent toward the universities is analogous. Not the university but their own new position in society is a major cause of student alienation, just as not the machine but the new social organization of work changed the role of the old craftsmen.

Student discontent is, in my view, only a harbinger of the discontent of a new and growing class. This discontent will probably reach students in the technical sciences later than those in the social sciences, if only because the latter have been trained to generalize ideas and societal issues. For those from the technical sciences a recognition of their real status may come only at work, where they will be joining portions of the old industrial working class whose skills and training also move them toward the creation of a new group of highly-skilled technicians.

III

THE PROCESS, which makes unskilled and semi-skilled workers less powerful, makes many skilled workers more important. They are harder to train and replace. Because of their strategic position, small groups of highly-skilled workers can often paralyze entire plants. Workers in process-flow industry who maintain the ever more complex machinery, skilled workers in communication industries, IBM, electronics and even in some of the old trades—tool- and die-makers, plant electricians, and certain branches of the building trades—begin to converge with the technicians and younger engineers into a new working class. For them, too, the gap between capabilities and decision-making becomes increasingly less rational, for often they are as competent to make day-to-day decisions as the foremen

[3] The most cogent discussion of the theories of the new working class is to be found in Serge Mallet, *La Nouvelle Classe Ouvrière*, Paris: Seuil, 1969.

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and management. Their skills are a key to modern production, and not the often archaic skills of the managers and owners.[4]

The rationality of factory organization and the legitimacy of discipline are threatened when they seem based not on superior knowledge but on institutional power alone. In all the modern industrial societies, power, after all, remains in the hands of the old elites. It was always more difficult to be a foreman or supervisor, to exercise authority over highly-skilled workers than over the unskilled, particularly when the skill of the workers and their knowledge of the work process was greater than that of lower-level management. A traditional way of handling this problem in such trades as printing, tool- and diemaking, etc., has been to have "working foremen" who were members of the union and organizers of tasks rather than managers of men. In many countries the highly skilled workers have developed a great deal of control over the work pace and process, eliminating lower management entirely. Thus the immediate authority faced by the worker was half-voluntary, subject to his democratic organization and therefore legitimate. With the new working class, however, the skills of the workers, whether utilized or not, are so often superior to those of the lower, middle and sometimes even higher management that authority derives from the organizational structure alone; it is neither reasonable nor legitimate.

A new working class, indispensable to modern economies, has a potential social weight greater than its actual numbers, which, in any case, are growing. Seemingly divergent strands—massive discontent among students in most industrial societies—a decrease in the independence of professionals, the "proletarianization" of many technicians and engineers, the increasing militancy of strategically-placed groups of skilled workers (particularly in Western Europe)—are interconnected. They represent an early phase in the developing consciousness of a stratum in modern industrial societies which can be described as a "new working class." While this term has been used in the United States,[5] it is generally counterposed to the more traditional stress on the working class as agency for social change. There is a peculiar continuity between the New Left attempt to identify the young intelligenstia as the major group potentially committed to radical social change and the decades-old liberal stress on middle-class liberals as the active political element. Both agree that the traditional working class is passive and will remain so. I say, however, that the new working class must help transform the labor movement and can become a significant social force only in alliance with sections of the old working class.

IV

In France in 1968 and Italy in 1970, the most militant strikers came from areas with the most advanced technology and the highest proportion of highly skilled or educated workers in electronics, chemistry, auto, aircraft, as well as from previously passive "middle-class" professions—teaching and journalism. Characteristic of these strikes is a stress on democracy at the point of production rather than mere traditional wage demands. Strikes of this kind indicate that relatively high wages do not succeed in buying off discontent. A sense of powerlessness is not sufficient for revolt; but a sense of powerlessness *at work* combined with a

[4] This is even more striking in Eastern Europe where the political "skills" of the managers of nationalized enterprises are, if anything, more anachronistic than the training of their opposite numbers in the West. E.g., recent studies in Poland and Yugoslavia show that most managers who have a university degree tend to have a general law or economics degree.

[5] See Richard Flacks, "The Revolt of the Young Intelligentsia: Revolutionary Class Consciousness in Post Scarcity America," in *Revolution Reconsidered* (New York: Free Press); and Michael Harrington, "Whatever Happened to Socialism," *Harper's*, February 1970.

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feeling of power *as a social group* provides an impetus toward organized militancy. This militancy expresses itself not only in regard to wages and working conditions but also in regard to problems of control in the work process. The demand for some form of worker's control increasingly characterizes the strikes in Europe—and it is raised by the most skilled workers and technicians, more often than not against the desire of the union leaders and parties of the Left.

This has profound implications for any analysis of student rebellions and "middle-class" discontent, but even more for the trade-union and socialist movements. For the latter, understanding and relating to this process is a matter of life and death. In Western Europe both the Social Democratic and Communist parties find that their bases of strength remain in the old working class, and these not only shrink numerically but become strategically less important. In France it was the previously Catholic trade unions (CFTU) rather than the Communist-led CGT that repeatedly took the initiative in strikes and alone related sympathetically to the students during May 1968. The CFTU's primary strength is in industries where the new rather than the old working class predominates.

V

A MAJOR DIVIDING LINE between Marxist and non-Marxist radicals has always been the insistence of Marxists that forces for social transformation had to exist in the society itself. Subjective desires of would-be revolutionists could never be enough. Around this issue center most of the polemics between Marx and Bakunin; it is the issue that led Kautsky to attack the Bolsheviks as neo-Jacobins. On the whole question of just how central is the presence of objective historical forces are waged bitter polemics between Guevarists and Marxists in Latin America.

In a way, both New Left utopianism and the increasing reformism of the mass working-class parties in Western Europe are based on the same analysis of the role of the old working class. Each sees the industrial working class as passive and, if anything, conservative. They reach a pessimistic view of the possibilities for social change deriving from the action of the industrial working class, and therefore become either de-facto liberal reformers or seek a different agency for social change. A theory of social change based on revolt of both the external colonies and internal marginal groups—either as yet unsocialized, as in the case of the students, or economically marginal, as in the case of the sub-proletariat—may sound extremely "radical." But, implicitly, it rejects the view that *conscious and voluntary* action of the *majority* in its own name and interests is either a possible or, for that matter, desirable way to achieve a socialist society. Its central view is that at least in the advanced industrialized countries, "socialism" can and should be imposed by marginal revolutionary minorities on a generally reactionary majority—and particularly against the desires of a working class seen as the core of this reaction.

Two views are common in the New Left: first, a profound pessimism about the possibilities of mobilizing mass support, which sees the working class as bought off by the consumer-oriented society or even racist and reactionary; second, a view of student revolt as the symptom of a generational revolt rather than a reflection of major social shifts. These analyses combine to give the New Left an unreal, temporary, marginal character—to fixate it as a form of kamikaze radicalism without hope of producing major social change, yet determined to make the (necessarily only moral) gesture.

VI

WHAT UNDERLINES THE RELEVANCE of the growing layer of technically and intellectually trained workers is that they are also to be found in the one-party "socialisms" of Eastern Europe where massive growth of

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the universities has an even more explosive potential—unless, of course, we assume an infinite capacity of those regimes to absorb and buy off their university-trained cadres. The irrationality and inefficiency, not to speak of the brutality, of the East European societies is more "pure" than that of the welfare capitalism of the West. This is perhaps the reason why the demands there are so much clearer at this time: democratization of major institutions (the government, mass organizations and party) or a multiparty system, and self-managment or workers' control of enterprises. Few of the oppositionists use New Left rhetoric, and if some small circles of intellectuals may have absorbed the "new and modern" view that the working class is reactionary and coopted, it is an illusion that no regime dares have. In Prague in 1968 workers called for workers' councils and a real say in day-to-day decisions over production, while intellectuals centered on intellectual freedoms. The reluctance of the Prague liberals to introduce workers' councils may go a long way to explain the relative indifference to the early phase of the Russian occupation by the same workers who, through massive slowdown, continued the struggle long after many intellectuals had left the country or had become silent.

Demands for workers' control or workers' councils are of course not new. They are to be found in early Marx, in Bakunin, Proudhon, and Kropotkin. They were present in the writings of some Bolsheviks and Rosa Luxemburg. Workers' control was not only central to the demands of the Workers' Opposition in the early Bolshevik period; it was the instinctive response of the working class in Spain at the opening of the Civil War. However, it is also true that most of the European Left parties, including Communists after the victory of Stalin, have borrowed heavily from the Jacobin tradition of revolutionary centralism. Though centralism was viewed not as antithetical to democracy but as an instrument against local, entrenched power, it did lead to neglect of the content and day-to-day organization of power. Nationalization of the means of production was seen by the Left primarily as depriving the old ruling classes of its economic power, but not as fundamentally changing work relations inside the newly nationalized industry. Today, renewed demands for workers' control reflect not only dissatisfaction of the workers in the nationalized industries of both Western and Eastern Europe with the old authoritarian structures. The changing character of the work force and mode of production further creates an ever larger pool of workers who believe that they are capable of running the industry and at least those social organizations most relevant to their day-to-day lives. A working though imperfect model of workers' control and decentralization in Yugoslavia gives the discussion some reality.

The fleshing-out of demands to control one's community and work place can give radical intellectuals a focus. It also forms a platform from which the utopian and elitist views current in so much of the student New Left can be confronted. Democratic socialist critics of the irrational and putschist rhetoric of the student radicals have too often criticized them in the name of old platforms and unexciting vistas of endless drudgery for the demands developed in a different era. Today a new meaning can be given to demands to extend democracy to all aspects of social and political life—and the technical skills and education of the new working class equip it to challenge the monopoly of expertise of the old elites.

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A major intellectual debt to Lucien Goldmann is gratefully acknowledged. The concept of the New Working Class used here relates primarily to the work of Serge Mallet and, to a lesser extent, to that of André Gortz.

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Carl Gershman

Reform Currents in the Building Trades

THE BUILDING-TRADES UNIONS are of concern to blacks and Puerto Ricans demanding entrance into them, to liberals who support this demand, and to those workers who feel threatened by it. The present situation could make for a social explosion—poverty and racial discrimination on one side, insecurity and anger on the other.

The confrontations we have seen in the building trades and the attention paid to them by the media have led to an oversimplification of the problem. There is a tendency to see it as merely a conflict between black and white, or good and evil, and many people who discuss the situation use these racial and moral terms interchangeably. But the problem cannot be dealt with unless we look at the factors that have brought it about. An important, often ignored factor is the economic situation in the building trades. How can large numbers of black workers get into the building trades without the creation of new jobs through expanded construction? Instead, by March 1970, cutbacks in federal outlays for construction, which are part of the Nixon administration's efforts to control inflation, had increased unemployment in the construction industry to 8.1 percent. This figure is higher than the general rate of unemployment among Negroes! Many white unionists are now out of work, which demonstrates that being a member of a union does not guarantee one a job. At the present level of construction, black demands for jobs can be met only at the expense of those now employed—which isn't likely to sit well with white workers. Attempts to force such a policy upon them through demonstrations, as in Pittsburgh, will be met with even larger counterdemonstrations. And the only beneficiary of such confrontations will be George Wallace or some other demagogue.

A second factor involves the capacity of the building-trades unions to respond imaginatively to the present crisis. Many of their opponents feel that their leadership lacks this capacity, and in some cases it seems true. Yet in others it is not, and here the public has ignored some major efforts of reform.

One such effort, effecting all the building-trades unions, has been quietly taking place in New York City's painters' union. Only a few years ago, this union was weak and corrupt, exploited by both employers and self-serving union officials, undemocratic, and neglectful of the economic welfare of its membership. Today it is striving to become a model union—free of corruption, democratically run, militant in its demands, and determined to achieve broad social reform. This radical transformation came about not through an attack on the union from without —a practice common of late and a result of many liberals' disenchantment with the labor movement—but through years of struggle by loyal unionists committed to the reinvigoration of union democracy.

BEFORE THE RECENT REFORMS, District Council 9 of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators, and Paperhangers, AFL-CIO,

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was dominated for 30 years by leaders with little respect for democratic procedures or goals. Louis Weinstock, a member of the National Committee of the Communist party, was secretary-treasurer of D.C. 9 for 10 years, until he was unseated and replaced in 1947 by Martin Rarback. At the time Rarback was a reformer, assisted in his rise to secretary-treasurer by Frank Schonfeld, then secretary of the District's anti-Communist caucus and leader of the reform movement. But Schonfeld soon became bitterly disillusioned with Rarback, who took to blacklisting and beating dissidents and conspired with employers to undermine work standards and pay scales. If workers protested, they would find themselves unemployed. And any group opposing Rarback had difficulty running a candidate for secretary-treasurer, for the aspirant had to win nomination by a vote of his Local. Rarback would head off such nominations by transferring enough stooges into the Local on election eve, thus providing a majority for a "dummy" candidate who would eventually announce his withdrawal from the race. If any legitimate opponent was able to run the nomination gauntlet, as Schonfeld was in 1961 (the first opposition candidate in eight years), he had to face new obstacles—denial of the use of mailing lists, censoring of material in the union newspaper, and intimidation of voters. Schonfeld lost the election that year, and when he tried again in 1964, he couldn't even win the nomination in his own Local 1011. Rarback had engineered an amendment bylaw abolishing the requirement that members have their photographs published in their union books: without any means of identifying voters, Rarback was able to stuff ballot boxes.

The reformers appealed to the U.S. Department of Labor and its Bureau of Labor Management Reports, which under Title IV of the 1959 Landrum-Griffin Act had been empowered to ensure fair union elections. But the reformers met with little success. The Labor Department admitted that violations of the Act had occurred in an election in 1965 (when Schonfeld ran for chairman of Local 1011), but the only action it took was to warn union officials not to do it again "in future elections," a warning ignored the following year.

Nor did Schonfeld and his allies find any sympathy in the General Executive Board of the union's International. Its president, S. Frank Raftery, had clearly identified himself with the status quo in every district where reformers were active. Time and again he had opposed Dow Wilson and Lloyd Green, the leaders of the reform opposition in San Francisco's District Council 16 who were murdered in the spring of 1966. These killings did not receive the same publicity as the recent Yablonski murder, perhaps because there is more public interest in the United Mine Workers; but the pattern is the same in both cases: a reform movement followed by violence against the leading reformers. After Ben Rasnick, the secretary-treasurer of D.C. 16, had been indicted and jailed for the murder of Wilson in September of that year, Raftery put the District under a trusteeship whose chief purpose was to protect the entrenched leadership. He established a similar trusteeship in D.C. 9 on October 19, 1966, the day after Rarback was indicted by a New York grand jury on charges of taking more than $840,000 in bribes from employers as part of a conspiracy to rig bids in City painting jobs.

Corruption and suppression of democracy went together. The bid-rigging racket in New York City's $7 million-a-year painting market involved contractors, union officials, and officials of the City Housing Authority. Before bidding, the contractors would agree among themselves as to who would submit the lowest bid for contracts to repaint apartments in city-owned housing projects. Any contractor who legitimately underbid the conspiring bidders would be subject to various forms of harassment by union officials. One such contractor was Jack Graham, who was beaten almost to death by two hoodlums on March 19, 1964. Honest bidders often

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were subject to fines, or forced to repeat a job after inspection by union and Housing Authority inspectors. At the same time, these inspectors permitted conspiring bidders to get away with shoddy work. Union officials allowed contractors to hire nonunion painters, subjected their own membership to speedups and overtime work at straight-time wages, and received bribes amounting to 2 percent of the gross receipts for contracts—about $840,000. Conspiring Housing Authority officials received half that figure. Subsequently, four individual contractors, four corporations, and Nathan Wheatman, the supervisor of the Housing Authority's Paint-Contract Inspection Division, have been convicted of bid-rigging. The Jury failed to reach a verdict on Rarback whose case is now pending before the Appellate Division of the New York State Court of Appeals.

THE EXPOSURE of gross union corruption and the decision of a sympathetic federal judge ultimately enabled Schonfeld to unseat the Rarback regime. On April 6, 1967, he filed suit in Federal District Court to enjoin the trusteeship of D.C. 9 and to prevent the trustee, who was one of Rarback's stooges, from obstructing an election for a new secretary-treasurer. Although the Labor Department urged that the complaints be dismissed, Judge Marvin E. Frankel declared the trusteeship illegal and ordered a new election, to be held under the auspices of an outside agency, the American Arbitration Association.

In this election campaign Schonfeld was provided with up-to-date mailing lists; for the first time he could appeal to all 13,000 members. He mailed them two issues of his own newspaper, *Painters' Free Press,* and an issue of Herman Benson's *Union Democracy in Action* which carried a summary of the Frankel decision. As the campaign gained support, Raftery and the General Executive Board dumped Rarback who had become a public burden, but adopted a hands-off policy in the election. Schonfeld did not need their support: on voting day he out-polled Rarback 3,230–2,529.

Schonfeld does not look the part of a dragon-killer; despite almost 40 years of internecine union warfare, he has managed to retain a relaxed, gentle disposition. He projects more the image of a Don Quixote than of a Saint George, yet he has been fighting real battles and winning them.

In his first report to the membership, Schonfeld gave an indication of the magnitude of the problems that confronted him:

> I can't truthfully say that I was astounded by what I found upon taking office September 19, but I can report that my worst fears were confirmed. I looked over the official District Council complaint book where members' grievances are supposed to be recorded together with their dispositions. The volume was soiled, covered with a thick layer of dust. When I opened it, I discovered that not a single complaint had been entered since 1957.

For 14 years not a single general membership meeting had been held; Schonfeld now put an end to that practice by summoning five such meetings during his first year in office. At the first meeting, held on October 16, 1967, he assured the membership that

> This union belongs to you. . . . I will not be silent if anyone's democratic rights are violated or if anyone sabotages your decisions. . . . We will build a painters union that is respected by the employers, by the public, and by the labor movement.

The membership voted overwhelmingly for amendments designed to guard against a resurgence of bossism. One of these stipulated that any member may obtain the services of the American Arbitration Association in future elections. Schonfeld also began to print *D.C. 9 Newsletter* in four languages—English, Spanish, Italian, and Greek—to communicate with his multilingual membership.

A new militancy on bread-and-butter is-

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sues resulted from these reforms. The old leadership, friendly with employers, had consistently agreed to low wage scales. Between 1965 and 1968, a period of rapid inflation, the painters had received an increase of only four cents an hour for the bulk of their work. No strike had taken place since 1945—and in 1962, Rarback had actually succeeded in breaking a strike of paperhangers by illegally importing scabs into the city.

On August 1, 1968, Schonfeld led the painters out on a five-week strike. The settlement that was reached abolished the double-wage scale through which 80 percent of the work (usually involving repainting) had been paid by substandard wages. A new single scale was established that, with fringe benefits, provided the members with an increase of $59 a week for a two-year period and a raise of pensions from a maximum of $90 to $130 a month. The union membership also won the right to choose its own stewards, thus bringing an end to the old system that had permitted employers to veto the workers' choice for collective-bargaining representatives.

THE UNION NOW BEGAN to rectify the disgraceful conditions in City painting that corruption had brought about. The painters were no longer willing to be subject to speed-ups that provided contractors and housing officials with cheap work. They wanted a change in the unreasonable weekly painting quota of 12–15 rooms—about twice their work load before the scandal started in 1957. The Housing Authority officials, however, were of a different mind.

On April 10, 1968, about 800 members of D.C. 9 demonstrated in front of the New York City Housing Authority offices, demanding cooperation in establishing a 10-room-a-week work rule. Four months of public hearings followed, during which the union defended its demands by pointing to the sweat-shop conditions on the job. The union's witnesses testified that the painters were required to use thinned paint, which was cheaper and could spread faster, and that their poor work contributed to the overall deterioration of public housing. The interest of the union thus coincided with that of the public—a public equivalent to that of a city almost the size of San Francisco, for it inhabited 600,000 rooms in the City's housing projects.

Union officials charged that the Housing Authority was using the hearings to whitewash its own performance by restricting the union counsel's questioning and cutting short testimony critical of the working conditions of City painters. In contrast, examiners extensively questioned witnesses who offered testimony favorable to the Authority's position. The Authority also prevented union representatives from inspecting apartments and gaining access to evidence upon which to base their remarks. Schonfeld submitted a statement in which he charged that the Housing Authority "avoids investigating its own contractual requirements," and noted that "if the Authority has financial problems, it must face up to them in a responsible fashion and not expect workers and tenants to bear the whole burden." The union also charged that the Authority had pressured contractors into filing suit with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against the 10-room rule and claimed that the Authority, fearing that the 10-room rule would drive prices too high, had warned contractors to keep their bids low—threatening to work otherwise directly with its own painters. The Authority followed through on this threat: on December 27, 1968, it rejected all contractors' bids. That same day, the contractors filed their NLRB suit. On August 28, 1969, the NLRB upheld the union's position that 10 rooms a week is a reasonable work index by dismissing the employers' complaint "in its entirety."

In another effort to undermine D.C. 9, the Housing Authority then promoted a competing union, Teamster Local 237, which

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D.C. 9 claimed was a company-type union, for it admitted to membership supervisors and top Authority officials. Yet, on June 24, 1969, in an election supervised by the City's Office of Collective Bargaining, the civil service painters chose D.C. 9 for their bargaining agent. Subsequently, the Housing Authority tried to undermine the union by hiring provisional painters, and even threatened to turn over the responsibility for painting to the tenants, a union-busting maneuver that would have guaranteed the projects' further deterioration.

Schonfeld now is hopeful that eventually the Authority will be persuaded to accept the 10-room rule, for it is more efficient than the 7–8 rooms a week which the authority admits are done by its provisional painters.

If an agreement can be worked out, Schonfeld will establish a training program —paid for out of a union benefit fund— which will bring the largely black and Puerto Rican provisional painters into the union at full journeyman's wages. (This, to my knowledge, is the first time such a training program has been proposed for civil service work.)

SCHONFELD'S SENSE of social responsibility has led him to place his union at the service of a broad reform movement that encompasses all of New York City's building-trades unions. If successful, it will upgrade the condition of thousands of black and Puerto Rican workers and improve the strained relations between the building trades and the black community.

Schonfeld has taken steps further to integrate D.C. 9 (now about 20 percent black and Puerto Rican) by initiating a pre-apprenticeship training program for tapers. Dry-wall taping, which consists of filling in wall boards with strips of plaster tape, is today one of the fastest-growing sections of the trade. Journeymen with taping skills are in great demand, and they can look forward to stable work at good wages. The painters' preapprenticeship program is an experimental effort to train hard-core unemployed. The trainees (85 percent from minority groups) go through six weeks of classroom drill before they receive on-the-job training. The six-week program has helped them make the transition to full-time work and, as a result, the dropout rate during the succeeding apprenticeship has been low. Apprentices have also been encouraged to stay on the job because they receive full journeyman's wages after only 18 months, which is half the normal training time.

Schonfeld is also the secretary of a committee established by the Building and Construction Trades Council which develops new training programs for minority workers in Model Cities programs. In this area the basic leadership is provided by Peter Brennan, the Council's president, who is concerned that New York does not repeat the example of Baltimore where antiunion employers' associations brought in nonunion black contractors and workers to undermine union standards. Brennan hopes to organize black and Puerto Rican workers within the building trades under normal union conditions; thus both the unions and the minority-group workers will be protected. As part of this organizing effort, Schonfeld's committee has worked out an agreement with Model Cities community groups in Brooklyn which may serve as a prototype for the rest of the country. The agreement provides for a higher ratio of on-the-job trainees to journeymen— one to four—than has been common in the past. It also establishes a new classification of trainee journeyman, which will qualify for training those too old to be apprentices and too unskilled to be journeymen. The committee is now trying to get government subsidies in order to pay advanced trainees full union wages.

The advantages of the program to the trainees are obvious—they will be protected from exploitation and will be full-fledged journeymen in the building trades long after

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the Model Cities funds have run out. In turn, the unions will become stronger as a result of the full integration of these workers.

There is also a potential for division between the unions and the black community in housing rehabilitation work, and here the painters' union is providing leadership in an ingenious program for organizing minority workers in the building-trades unions. Until recently, the unions have taken on only work in new construction and have ignored the whole field of urban rehabilitation which, consequently, was a jungle of inferior nonunion work. The contractors in rehabilitation were like the slumlords in real estate—marginal, often corrupt operators who lacked the capital to make it in the big market and exploited their small market for all it was worth. Slumlords exploited tenants, and contractors exploited nonunionized workers who were usually blacks and Puerto Ricans.

Today, rehabilitation of deteriorating slum housing is becoming a major area of public and private investment. It now attracts numerous contractors who anticipate large profits and pay substandard wages to the unorganized rehabilitation workers. These contractors have an interest in keeping up racial discrimination in the building trades. It will keep their nonunionized workforce and their open shop intact, and at the same time allow them to pose as crusaders for equal opportunity who provide employment for victims of union discrimination.

The building-trades unions are certainly much to blame for abetting this situation for the unions have been sluggish in entering the rehabilitation field. Not only is there resistance in the building-trades unions to organizing large numbers of nonwhites, but they are simply not geared to any kind of organizing, for in the past their primary function has been to apportion available work in new construction among those already organized. Nevertheless, the unions are beginning to adapt to the new situation. With the increasing number of workers in housing rehabilitation there has been a spillover of nonunion labor into areas that traditionally were under their aegis. Thus, in their new efforts to organize nonunion workers there is a factor of self-preservation—and a new sense of social responsibility, for the work of men like Brennan and Schonfeld is beginning to affect the unions' leadership ranks.

So far, the painters' union's organizing program is still in its experimental stages and consists of efforts to organize the workers in rehabilitation projects. This effort is modeled on the organizing systems of an industrial union. Unlike the other building trades which are organized in separate crafts—i.e., plumbers, electricians—the painters are organizing workers across craft lines. Moreover, the workers they take in receive on-the-job training and are paid wage rates prevailing in their specific crafts. This is a provisional solution to the new organizational challenge most of the building-trades unions are not yet able to meet. As soon as other unions begin to organize in their particular jurisdiction, the painters will step aside. So far, only the plumbers' union is following the painters' example. It will organize, in addition to the plumbers, all workers in the mechanical trades, such as steamfitters and sheetmetal workers; for the present, the plumbers leave the rest of the task to the painters. When other building-trades unions want to take into their ranks workers of their own craft presently organized by the painters or the plumbers, they are permitted to do so.

The democratic reforms within the painters union are only partly responsible for these new developments; the real cause is the racial crisis that has gripped the nation and has posed enormous challenges to the building trades. If the new organizing program proves successful, it will represent a major step toward economic justice for black workers, racial integration in the

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building trades, and better relations between the black community and the whole labor movement.

It will be a tragedy if this reform movement is to be undermined because there are not enough jobs for the black workers the unions are willing to take in. Fundamental economic factors of supply and demand underscore the mutual interest of black and white workers, though that mutual interest is often obscured by racial antagonism. If the job supply remains constant or diminishes while the number of workers demanding jobs increases—a situation that is occurring today—the result will be racial tension, as workers fight among themselves for scarce employment opportunities. Schonfeld and other unionists are acutely aware of these problems. They understand that the economic progress of black Americans depends on their full integration into all aspects of the American trade union movement, and that this integration is dependent upon an economy of abundance. If integration fails to occur, there will be more Pittsburghs where black and white workers are pitted against each other in confrontations that will bring harm to all.

Women's Liberation: Two Centuries Ago

. . . when we Home are come,
Alas! we found our Work but just begun;
So many Things for our Attendance call,
Had we ten Hands, we could employ them all.
Our Children put to Bed, with greatest Care
We all Things for your coming Home prepare:
You sup, and go to Bed without delay,
And rest yourselves till the ensuing Day;
While we, alas! but little Sleep can have,
Because our froward Children cry and rave. . . .
In ev-ry Work (we) take our proper Share;
And from the Time that Harvest doth begin
Until the Corn be cut and carry'd in,
Our Toil and Labour's daily so extreme,
That we have hardly ever *Time to dream.*

—Mary Collier, *The Woman's Labour: an Epistle . . . to Mr. Stephen Dick; in Answer to his late Poem, called The Thresher's Labour* (London, 1739)

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Victor Alba

New Alignments in Latin America

Trends Toward Technocratic Paternalism

LATIN AMERICA is about to enter a new phase of its history that may be more important than either the decade of Castroism or the earlier period when middle-class parties were predominant. The tendency of which I speak is subterranean, noticeable only the last few years, and just beginning to flower.

Characteristic of this new phase is the coming together of social groups which, though on the surface quite different, have common interests and conceptions:

a) *Young officers and a few of the older generals.* At one time, say a few decades ago, the young officers believed that they could restore the prestige of the armed forces by adopting a strictly constitutional, noninterventionist stance. But now it has become clear to them that the army in Latin America is so strongly identified as policeman for the traditional oligarchy that more stringent measures are needed. Democracy as understood in Latin America—formal democracy limited to elections and pretty much unrelated to social and economic life—does not satisfy the aspirations raised in these young officers by their technical education. Many of them have been educated abroad, and almost always in schools teaching them foreign models of social development. They acquired a sense of efficiency lacking in officers of the older generation. And in rejecting the policeman's role, they have to find another mission. Such functions as "civic action" (that is, road building, education, etc.), which the army has carried out in several countries, is insufficient to give them a sense of mission.

Nor does simple national defense suffice in Latin America, where the only functioning service is the Inter-American System, that is, the mechanism encouraging the solution of border conflicts. Hence, after leaving school and becoming submerged in an atmosphere of exalted, abstract nationalism, these young officers find justification for the armed forces in vague (and often not so vague) dreams of military power. The army must become something it obviously is not in Latin America, an effective social instrument. For that it must have a human infrastructure capable of transforming itself into a functioning unit. But since the existing society is hostile to this goal, it must be modified so that it will encourage an economy supporting modern armed forces.

Young Latin-American officers for the most part come from the middle class. They share its frustration under the present oligarchic system. Begun originally as a scholarly obligation, then continued in search for an answer to their own needs, the reading of the works not so much of Marx as of Mao and Che Guevara has led them to desire both agrarian and fiscal reform. Mao, Giap, and Guevara have further added to their conviction, characteristic of all officers, that society is to be governed by select minorities, and that it is up to such elites to manage social change and tell the people how it ought to be happy.

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The young officers, in a word, reveal four traits: nationalism, reformism, paternalism, and the desire for efficiency.

b) *Young businessmen.* Many of Latin America's young businessmen are the sons of businessmen, often educated in the United States or Western Europe, or in local schools teaching foreign techniques. Upon their return home they want to apply model systems developed in societies quite different from their own. When these fail because of obstacles placed in their path by the bureaucracy, or because of the persistent spirit of artisanship among many workers, or because of outdated banking systems, they lose patience. Aware that industry cannot prosper without a much larger national and continental market, they come to favor reform of the social structure (especially agrarian reform) because they see in this the most rapid way to create such a market. They are highly nationalistic, partly because one tends to distrust what one is imitating, partly because their immediate interests clash with those of foreign capital.

Their nationalism is expressed in anti-Americanism, yet the models they prefer to copy are American. They believe that democracy, as a way of speeding up development, has failed, at least in Latin America, and they admire Soviet methods of development. Because they are denied significant participation in political power, they feel frustrated. They lack the slightest respect for the oligarchy whose place they propose to take. Elitists, they would like to see themselves directing reforms and running the country. This, they say, is the only way of "making things work."

Latin America's young businessmen, like the young army officers, are nationalists, reformists, paternalists, and obsessed with the notion of efficiency.

c) *Technicians.* The majority of Latin-American technicians have been trained abroad, although some are now being schooled in national institutions. Almost all come from the middle class. They, too, want to make use of foreign models, the only models they know. This attraction for anything from abroad is even more pronounced among sociolcgists and economists than among engineers and architects. Habitually impermeable by political ideologies, Latin-American technicians are nationalistic through contagion. They accept reform not in the spirit of justice but because it is a prerequisite to efficiency. They believe that bureaucratic worries are the image of democracy and that, usually, social problems must give way to purely economic and technological objectives. Convinced they know how to do things better than anyone else, they consequently feel they must run the country. From their ranks are recruited the cadres who follow the doctrine of *"disarrolismo"* (or "development-ism," development seen as panacea).

Hence, the technicians are nationalists and reformers too, bowing in adoration before efficiency.

d) *The Lumpen Left or, to use an incongruous term, the Lumpen Establishment.* This group consists in part of frustrated middle-class elements, of malcontents who have broken with the old parties and the ruling social structure and have set up miniscule parties which split and resplit, publish theoretical reviews, uphold Castro, systematically attack the United States, and oscillate between Moscow and Peking, neo-Marxism and Trotskyism. Few among them actually become guerrillas; most of them remain totally passive or limit themselves to abstract polemics. They think of themselves as revolutionaries. In reality, they simply support structural reforms, which are much more moderate than they realize. Because they are anti-American and pro-Castro, they describe themselves as of the Left, but they are really elitists since they say that they, and they alone, can make "the revolution." Like the other groups, they recognize neither the working class nor the peasantry, and have no

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contact with or influence over the masses. Like the groups previously described, they have a profound distrust of the people. By an act of destiny known to them as the "Current of History," they feel themselves called upon to make the people's revolution.

They too are nationalist, paternalist, reformist, but not obsessed with efficiency on the technical level. They are after *political* efficiency, which they call by resounding names: dictatorship of the proletariat, direct democracy, New Left, etc.

NONE OF THESE four groups can take power in its own name. Even when they occasionally become allies, they lack sufficient strength to take power by means normal to Latin America; that is, elections (more or less honest, according to the country), or coups d'état. But the aspiration to power is intense, as is the desire to take political decisions which, to the first three groups cited above, seem to be no more than technical decisions. Except for the "Lumpen Left," none of these groups is interested in theoretical analysis.

How, then, to take power? The solution seems obvious: *by infiltration.* We are accustomed to Communist infiltration. But the Communists are not the only ones skilled in that art. He who aspires to power without possessing the strength to attain it by his own means must reach it by interposed persons or groups. And this is precisely what is happening in Latin America. It is not a matter of an organized, directed, and disciplined movement, as is the case of Communist infiltration, but rather a spontaneous cooptation brought about by an identity of viewpoints.

Over the past few years, military regimes of the traditional type have multiplied in Latin America. But the infiltration by technocrats, young officers and civilians, has rapidly promoted a change in their nature. Instead of a coup to maintain order, to arbitrate between oligarchic factions, or to end a demagogy threatening to get out of the oligarchy's control, we now have seizures of power *to establish authoritarian governments with technocratic and developmental objectives.* These regimes are nationalist in the double sense of anti-Americanism and the drive to expand their power. And they are reformist in that they intend to impose reforms from above.

Today's young officers are inclined to do what the older officers had kept civilians from doing for over half a century, but they must operate under much more difficult conditions than in the past, when reforms were the hope of popular movements. This has either been forgotten or is ignored by those who rush to support these regimes under the pretext that they are reformist and nationalist. Reforms are revolutionary or progressive when carried out by civilians and at the base of the society, or when they result in a more favorable distribution of wealth, a broader freedom, and a wider popular participation in power. But when they are the product of rulers operating from above who resort to authoritarian methods, then neither more freedom nor a wider sharing of power results. On the contrary, the few existing liberties may be lost and even less participation may come about.

Reforms that add to the sum total of wealth without a more equitable distribution are not revolutionary reforms. In the absence of freedom of criticism (and such freedom signifies not only free speech but freedom to compete peacefully for power), no increase in wealth is likely to lead to a better distribution of wealth. Any system tending to delay recognition of the people's right to take part in political life is reactionary. In Latin America, minimal participation means that the masses have their own organizations, that the trade union movement is independent, and that these bodies can carry out struggles.

The paternalism of technocratic rule will inevitably be responsible for efforts to accumulate capital by a series of "forced

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marches." But to build capital by "forced marches," when at the same time one clings to the prevalent Latin-American nationalism, demands a recourse to underconsumption and overexploitation. People must be "trained" to accept "voluntary" sacrifices. An "enemy" has to be created. Furthermore, a totalitarian type of organization is needed so that all citizens—actually, more subjects than citizens—are under surveillance every moment of their life. Produce more, consume less!

WHO IN LATIN AMERICA has grasped the technique of mass organization and obsessional propaganda? Not the business community; not the young officers who have never had contact with the people; nor the democratic forces which would refuse to collaborate with such a system.

Those who lend themselves to such activities are the Communists of all shades, together with the "Lumpen Left." We already have examples in several countries where military governments are actively infiltrated by technocrats. If in the past tacit collaboration between dictators and Communists was prevented by doctrinal reasons, there are now fewer obstacles to such collaboration.

This sort of anti-Americanism probably cannot maintain itself over a long period. All signs now point toward an agreement between Moscow and President Nixon. Officially, it will be over arms limitation, but tacitly it may come down to a division of the world into two vast spheres of influence, with China on the sidelines.

One consequence would be a carte blanche to both the Soviet Union and the United States in their zones of influence. Quite possibly, the Latin-American technocratic-military regimes would then announce that only they can resist American pressure. But the time will come when they will have to drop such an attitude, since they will no

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longer be able to threaten, as in the past, a shift to the Soviets. The "Lumpen Left" who have been demanding an end to the Cold War for 20 years will then discover that, once it is over, their countries may be less protected than they have been in the past.

A further consequence may be that various governments, setting up the indispensable "enemy" in order to sustain a policy of demanding sacrifices from the people, might deliberately foment national rivalries, border conflicts, and the whole rigmarole associated with expansionism. It would hardly be astonishing if Latin America, led by militarists and technocrats with the collaboration of the "Lumpen Left," should then enter a period of armed conflict, national wars, and other absurdities.

I contend that the situation analyzed above is not only the status quo but was foreseeable years ago. True enough, events are never as simple as described on paper. There always are nuances, personal reactions and gestures. Not all the pseudo-leftists will play the game of the technocrats, nor will every law and decree promulgated have an overtly technocratic character. But it takes little daring to foretell that in the years ahead Latin America will live through a revolution from above that will destroy the landed oligarchy, give an economic preponderance to the industrial bourgeoisie and political power to a new oligarchy of technicians, intellectuals, and bureaucrats. There will be many who steadfastly claim that, in spite of the methods used, this represents progress. Majority opinion in Latin America will certainly be otherwise, but who will care?

IS THIS unfolding of events inevitable? Perhaps not, probably yes.

The decline of the Democratic Left in Latin America was inevitable because a political movement continually blocked from taking power by military coups is bound to lose its initiative. Nonetheless, the analysis of Latin America made by the Democratic Left stands: the need to have a diversity of political parties representing different classes, groups, interests, etc.; the need for political integration of the nation; an anti-imperialism based upon antioligarchic considerations; a refusal to look for sacrificial lambs in the Spanish heritage, "Yankee" imperialism, Soviet infiltration, etc.; finally, the need to go to the masses, to awaken and organize them.

The only antidote to pseudo-leftist, technocratic and military paternalism is to educate and organize the people so that they acquire the capacity to make their own decisions. This is not so simple, and explains why I believe a period of neomilitary rule, while not inevitable, is more than likely.

One must begin almost from the beginning. Such an undertaking belongs not to large groups or movements but to small units and individuals. Not from above, not in reviews and personal contacts, not in publicity in the daily press. But long hours devoted to the unions, in the slums, among the peasants. This road alone can change the social structure of Latin America.

—*Translated by* STANLEY PLASTRIK

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Paul Goodman

Memoirs from Prison

This article will appear as the Introduction to an edition of Alexander Berkman's Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist, *to be published this fall by Schocken Books, Inc.*

THE EXTRAORDINARY APPALLING BEGINNING of this extraordinary book—I can't conceive of any other way to make credible the *attentat* on Frick by the compassionate, sensitive, and intellectual young man, and the author succeeds in making it totally credible. No novelist of the period could have accomplished it, but Berkman was able to remember a style from the high Romantic period of Robert Schumann and E. T. A. Hoffman, onrushing impetuosity luridly lit by flashes of childhood and early adolescent traumas from the unconscious, leading to an explosive act. And writing it down was an overflow of strong feelings recollected in tranquility, as Wordsworth defined poetry. (Did he find the tranquility, from time to time, in jail?) It is a vivid poem of adolescent infatuation, seeking to repair the self and be a Man, as he says. It puts the act beyond moral approval or condemnation; it is so.

My guess is that such writing is, for its author, a catharsis of pity and fear, and he is afterwards in the world differently.

Prison literature is an old genre among human beings. And our century, and maybe especially the coming generation, is producing more and more examples. They write well, these pacifists, blacks, anarchists, free speakers, fighters for justice, whether in corporate liberal, fascist, or socialist countries. The regimes of the world evidently cannot put up with some beautiful human spirits.

In one important respect, I think there is a notable difference between our contemporaries and the prison writers of a few generations back. Men like Kropotkin, Berkman, and Debs were quite certain, both by their philosophy and the evidence of their senses, that the concept of punishment is worthless and the jails must be simply abolished. The Bastille is the essence of what is rotten and must be stormed first. Except in a few cases, jails do not reform. They always hinder rehabilitation. Far from protecting society, they create more and more serious crimes. They cause immense unnecessary suffering, and the effect on the warders also is humanly disastrous. Big isolated jails do not even provide public revenge, and putting trouble out of sight heightens social anxiety rather than allays it. If every citizen would make occasional visits to prisons and mass insane-asylums, I think that, corrupt as we are, these institutions would not endure. What to do with hard cases is a real question, but it is better to do nothing at all than to continue what does more harm than good. Debs said, "So long as one person is in prison, I am not free." In our times, however, even thoughtful pacifists and libertarian socialists hardly mention the abolition of jails. For instance, unlike fifty years ago when it was common, there is almost never a plank in a radical platform on the subject of prisons at all. (A single exception was Dave McReynolds, of the War Resisters League, running for Congress in 1968.) How is this?

One possible explanation is that our militants are so stupid that they take prison for an acceptable institution for their enemies. I have seen a sign at a demonstration, "Free Such and Such! Put District Attorney X. in jail!" Black Panthers demand the right for black juries to

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put black people in black jails. To my surprise, Coretta King did not ask for amnesty for Ray. And apparently it is all right for Cuba to keep enemies of the Revolution in cages. Certainly Berkman or Debs would not have accepted such a notion of revolution.

But I doubt that our present radicals really are this stupid. I suspect that the truth is more terrible.

Rather, the jails, like the high schools, like the swollen cities, like the polluted rivers, like the congested traffic, like the TV, like slow or quick violence, are taken for granted as the nature of things. People are so swamped by the conditions of modern life that they do not really believe that these evils are human artifacts and could be otherwise. And when in daily life people are harried, circumscribed, bored, and threatened anyway, the difference tends to diminish between being out of jail and in jail. I wonder whether, to a frank glance, the routine of most of us in New York does not seem very like jail, some with privileges, some in solitary. Hobbes had a salutary doctrine that a prisoner has a moral duty to escape, by force or fraud, and return to the "state of nature"; but this does not apply if there is no state of nature.

II

"OFTEN I think that we revolutionists are like the capitalist system. We drain men and women of the best that is in them, and then stand quietly by and see them end their last days in destitution and loneliness."

It was Emma Goldman, the Girl in Berkman's book, who made this remark in 1933, a couple of years before Berkman killed himself. (I quote it from Paul Avrich's *The Russian Anarchists.*) It was the sad time when the surviving Russian anarchists, those who had not been slaughtered or imprisoned, were scattered in exile. By the Workers' State that they had done much to bring into power.

"Gray are the passing days," wrote Berkman in his diary, after Lenin and Trotsky's slaughter of the libertarian sailors at Kronstadt in 1921 —after he and Emma Goldman had vainly tried to mediate. "One by one the embers of hope have died out. Terror and despotism have crushed the life born in October. The slogans of the Revolution are foresworn, its ideals stifled in the blood of the people. The breath of yesterday is dooming millions to death; the shadow of today hangs like a pall over the country. Dictatorship is trampling the masses under foot. The Revolution is dead; its spirit cries in the wilderness. . . . I have decided to leave Russia." (Avrich, p. 233.)

The high pitch of this rhetoric—it was written for himself, not for publication—is not exaggerated, considering the magnitude of the events and the truth of his statements.

A few years before, he had again been arrested in New York for violating the draft law. He was deported from the United States in 1919.

Yet the same disappointment is already fully explicit in the early days of the *Prison Memoirs.* In Chapter Six he describes his dismay at the cowardice, venality, and ignorance of their own interests, of his fellow prisoners, the Negro, the Thief, and—alas!—the noble Homestead Workman. As a writer, he obviously does not know whether to laugh or to cry at his own naiveté; and neither does the reader, for it is told with such frankness and irony. But the young man, sentenced to 14 years, is

> pacing the floor in agitation over the conversation with his fellow prisoners. Why can't they understand the motives that prompted his act? Their manner of pitying condescension is aggravating.
>
> He passes a sleepless night. The events of the day have stirred him to the very depths. Bitterness and anger against the Homestead striker fill his heart. His hero of yesterday, the hero of the glorious struggle of the People—how contemptible he has proved himself! how cravenly small! No consciousness of the great mission of his class, no proud realization of the part he himself had acted in the noble struggle. A cowardly overgrown boy, terrified at tomorrow's punishment for the prank he has played!

Politically, to be sure, there is also another side to the story. In the web of history, Berkman's sacrifice is a bright one in the millions of strands. The considerable gains of labor in the United States were due to such acts and lives, although the outcome toward a worthy society has been far short of, in some ways counter to, what he wanted. I think we have

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to say four different and contradictory things: If people had followed Berkman's way, there would be a better world. The fact that they did not, and presumably could not, follow it, means that he was wrongheaded, he suffered from ideas. Because of him, there is more value in the world than there would be otherwise; the noble cause has been kept alive for another generation. And human beings do not *know* any better process than this blundering and tormented process of history.

III

BUT THE MOST IMPRESSIVE news of Berkman's, as of other prison books, is not blundering and tormented at all. It is how human beings are made of rubber and bounce. Given any resources of physical health, moral conviction, or intellectual alertness, they make do in a shaking bad environment, without being personally destroyed. Naturally, those who survive to write memoirs have already proved they have survivability.

The bouncy resiliency is most exhibited, in this genre, when there is a project of escape, however far-fetched. In Berkman's book, when the escape plot begins, the abrupt reversal of the prose is almost comic, as if years of repression and dejection had had no effect at all. But it is so whenever there is sudden hope, however far-fetched. In the winter of '67 and the spring of '68 we saw it among the youth of Czechoslovakia. Most of them had been born since 1947 when the Russians took over, and on any sociological theory whatever, they should have been brainwashed and internally cowed, rather than just bowing to the inevitable and biding their time. But they were not.

In my opinion, the flood of excitement occurs just because there is a possibility of doing something that makes a modicum of sense, instead of the utter waste and endless senselessness in which one has been doing time, whether in jail or under a tyranny. The need to make sense *is* the craving for freedom.

Berkman's story, where the far-fetched plot to escape falls through, is especially instructive. For there is no collapse of spirit, but just a somber return to his more profound humane concerns that have also begun to make sense. In the best cases, like his, what seems to occur over the weeks and months and years is just the opposite of the dreary sentiment that I referred to above, that the outside world is nearly as much of a prison as the prison. It is, rather, the philosophical discovery that wherever one is is a sample of all the reality that there is.

It is a useless question whether or not it is a good or adequate sample. In prison, fork, shoelace, radiator-pipe, and clove of nutmeg become important objects of study and use. "Ten steps from one corner to another is already something," says Kropotkin; "if I repeat them one hundred fifty times I shall have walked a verst." Jim Peck, who does not tend to poetry and rapture, seems in his prison to be enraptured by windows: "I used to go and gaze eagerly at the valley below and the hills beyond" or "After the sun dropped behind the prison building we waited for the orange and pink clouds to fade into gray. The tension of the day would ease as we stood by our windows." Activists who like to devise obstructive tactics find also in prison the means for fun and games—in recent literature, this activity seems to take the place of the older intricate schemes of escape, which would tend to confirm my hunch that they judge inside and outside as fairly equivalent aspects of the same System. Political prisoners engage in political actions relevant to the local circumstances, sabotage, petitions, boycotts, hunger strikes, about segregation, maltreatment, lousy food. We have been seeing political action in military jails.

Predictably, as an anarchist and a poet, Berkman devotes most of his pages to the characters and stories of men, his fellows: their loyalty and fortitude, their pettiness and duplicity, the brutality of the powerful, the suffering of the powerless. Remarkably for his time, he seems to make no distinction at all in his mind between "political prisoners" and "common criminals," though in their paranoid treatment of him, the authorities continually keep making the distinction—to his disadvantage (their panic about his ideology is very American). In contemporary social-psychology, needless to say, we understand that they are *all* political prisoners, which Berkman, as an anarchist, knew. In the older theology, we are all common criminals.

His telling of the sexual scenes is especially notable. Most of the prison writers treat homosexuality with varying degrees of tolerance or

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matter-of-factness; it is rare that they are outraged or censorious like the do-good investigators. But Berkman alone unsophisticatedly goes to the essence, the longing, being in love, and love, that would inevitably occur. His embarassed conversations are quite wonderful; I do not know any novels of sixty years ago to equal them. He does not mention any scenes of sexual brutality, however, though this also would be the nature of the case where men are not free. Being in prison is one of the conditions that most need fellow-feeling, but it is one of the worst conditions for it.

And the last episode of prison books is getting out, when it turns out that after all one has not come back to freedom. Not because the outside world is a prison, but because one is oneself not all there. And the Girl is no longer all there. . . . This is why the writers write. Men returned from the front lines do the same.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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EASTER MESSAGE

EASTER is especially meaningful here in Vietnam where every day on the battlefields you come face-to-face with the realities of life and death. Easter and the promise of immortality was exemplified by the resurrection of Jesus Christ nearly 2000 years ago. This knowledge and your noble cause can sustain you in your most trying moments. It is the promise that permits man to rise above the specter of his own fallability and has contributed so much to the heritage of our great nation.

Now here on Easter in the year of our Lord Nineteen Hundred and Seventy we find ourselves thousands of miles from our homeland engaged in a struggle to assist a nation which has taken as its hallmark the worth of the individual and the dignity of his soul. You can take great pride in your progress and know in your hearts that this day denotes the fact that Christ's own struggle to obliterate evil in the world continues in your actions. I salute you on this day and join you in the common hope that your faith will soon be realized.

s/E. B. ROBERTS
t/E. B. ROBERTS
Major General
Commanding

Stanley Plastrik

Thomas Jefferson and Black Rebellion

> . . . prejudice of race alone blinded the American people to the debt they owed to the desperate courage of 500,000 Haitian Negroes who would not be enslaved.
>
> —Henry Adams, *History of the United States, Jefferson,* Vol. I

LARGELY THANKS TO the writings of C. L. R. James, Ralph Korngold, and others, the great Haitian Negro revolutionary leader Toussaint L'Ouverture has in recent years become familiar to American students. In conventional American history texts, it is now even customary to acknowledge Toussaint's role in forcing Napoleon to disgorge the Louisiana Territory, contrary to his imperial ambitions of setting up an empire west of the Mississippi. The French army that was originally to reoccupy Louisiana was diverted to Haiti by the slave rising and there met its end.

Less well-known, but increasingly a part of our national history in the light of modern scholarship, is the role of the United States under Thomas Jefferson, after his assumption of the presidency in 1801, with respect to later phases of the Haitian rebellion and the downfall of L'Ouverture. One of the better standard texts sums this up as follows:

> With respect to Santo Domingo, however, he [Jefferson] did not continue the policy of Adams, who had cooperated with the British in recognizing and supporting the rebel regime of Toussaint. Jefferson assured the French minister in Washington that the American people, especially those of the slaveholding states, did not approve of the Negro revolutionary who was setting a bad example for their own slaves. He even gave the French minister to believe that the United States would join with France in putting down the rebellion.[1]

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[1] Robert N. Current, T. Harry Williams, and Frank Freidel, *American History: A Survey* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 197.

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President Adams, though a conservative and Federalist successor to Washington, had extended de facto recognition, in the form of a commercial treaty and other diplomatic steps, to the independent government of Toussaint L'Ouverture in 1799. This was considered a blow at the French while simultaneously contributing toward a desired rapprochement with the British. According to Samuel Bemis,[2] Adams's action delayed France's reoccupation of the island and the repossession of New Orleans until at least "the decisive year" of 1801. Finally, to reaffirm Adams's view as well as that of Congress, the Act of February 27, 1800, which suspended commercial relations between the United States and France and her possessions, specifically exempted Haiti. At that time the island, under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture, was in a new phase of its rebellion against the French planters and slave owners.

From March 21, 1801, onward, after Napoleon's coup d'état and his assumption of the office of First Consul, France dealt directly with Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States. Jefferson's first actions were withdrawal of the Adams de facto recognition, cancellation of the trade agreement, and the removal of the American consular representative on the island. It became clear that Bonaparte intended to crush Toussaint and to restore slavery in Santo Domingo; to historians, it is also clear that Jefferson scarcely understood the global meaning of Napoleon's strategy, while the British at least grasped the situation in part. Jefferson thought in terms of the slave insurrection's possible effect upon our own Southern slavery. Napoleon had a larger if grimmer vision:

> If he [Toussaint] and his blacks should succumb easily to their fate, the wave of French empire would roll on to Louisiana and sweep far up the Mississippi; if St. Domingo should resist, and succeed in resistance, the recoil would spend its force on Europe, while America would be left to pursue her democratic destiny in peace.[3]

From Napoleon's "secret and confidential instruction" to the general assigned to destroy L'Ouverture—the notorious LeClerc—we know how Jefferson's parochial view of the Haitian crisis took form:

> Jefferson has promised that the moment the French army sets foot in the colony all necessary measures will be taken to starve out Toussaint and to aid the [French] army.[4]

Step by step, the new administration's policy of supporting the French and undermining the "Black Jacobin" leader unfolded. The French chargé d'affaires at Washington, Louis Pichon, obtained the following guarantees from Jefferson in an interview reported to Talleyrand:

(*a*) The Adams policy of cooperating with England to help the insurrectionary Haitians will be reversed;

(*b*) the new American policy will be anti-Toussaint;

(*c*) The United States will aid France to regain control over her colony;

(*d*) in line with this, Toussaint will receive no further American aid;

(*e*) if France should make peace with England, the United States "would furnish your army and fleet with everything and . . . reduce Toussaint to starvation."[5]

When the new American, Jefferson-appointed Consul-general arrived shortly thereafter in Haiti he came without the normal courtesy of a personal letter from Jefferson to the Haitian leader. Scenting what was in the wind, Toussaint reacted sharply and bitterly to this snub. As C. C. Tansill explains,

> Jefferson had little liking for the Negro dictator, and he had no scruples about laying plans for his destruction. If Napoleon wished to restore the French Empire in the Caribbean he would have no more sincere well-wisher than Jefferson. . . .[6]

AT THIS POINT it is clear that Jefferson was blind to the future danger to Louisiana repre-

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[2] Samuel F. Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, 4th ed. (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1955).

[3] Henry Adams, *History of the United States, Vol. I, Jefferson* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 48.

[4] Ralph Korngold, *Citizen Toussaint* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1965), p. 246.

[5] Charles C. Tansill, *The United States and Santo Domingo, 1798--1873* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1938), p. 81.

[6] *Ibid*, p. 85.

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sented by such a policy; he simply failed to grasp Napoleon's long-term perspectives. An act of Congress pushed through by Jefferson ended all trade (except where the French were in control) with the island of Santo Domingo. Jefferson's attitude stemmed from his reaction to the sight of rebellious blacks murdering their slave masters. Recognition of a successful Negro revolution, such as President Adams's earlier action had implied, would create a dangerous precedent. The United States must help repress the spirit of revolt.

The rest of the tale is a familiar if tragic one. Ultimately, Toussaint will put himself into General LeClerc's hands, relying on his and Napoleon's honor. Then, suddenly arrested on Napoleon's orders, he will be placed on a ship and sent to suffer his final agony in a remote French dungeon located in the mountains near the Swiss frontier; on April 7, 1803, he will expire miserably. The continued struggle in Haiti under new black leaders will lead to the abandonment of Santo Domingo by the French and, despite Jefferson's miscalculations, to the sale of Louisiana to the United States.

There remains but to point out the secret fate already in store for the Haitians and contained in the instructions of Napoleon to his general. In the words of Henry Adams, the First Consul's orders were "positive, precise and repeated":

> Follow exactly your instructions and the moment you have rid yourself of Toussaint, Christophe, Dessalines, and the principal brigands, and the masses of the blacks shall be disarmed, send over to the continent all the blacks and mulattoes who have played a role in the civil trouble. . . . Rid us of these gilded Africans, and we shall have nothing more to wish.[7]

Later, after virtually two French armies (17,000 and 28,300 men respectively) had been destroyed, LeClerc, in the midst of a new insurrection, will write to his master:

> . . . it is necessary to blame here only the malady [yellow fever] which has destroyed my army, the premature reestablishment of slavery at Guadeloupe, and the newspapers and letters from France, which speak only of slavery. Here is my opinion on this country. We must destroy all the Negroes in the mountains, men and women, keeping only infants less than twelve years old; we must also destroy half of those of the plain, and leave in the colony not a single man of color who has worn an epaulette. Without this the colony will never be quiet.[8]

There is little reason to doubt that Jefferson was generally familiar with these views and that he shared them to a considerable extent. Great figure of the American Enlightenment that he was, Jefferson embodied the ambivalence toward blacks which runs through American history; his prejudices were powerful enough not only to shape his hostile attitudes toward Toussaint but to blind him even to what was the best national interest of his country. A study in depth of his contradictory attitude toward the Negro is long overdue. I would suggest that some of the psychic roots of white racism in America can be found in this great man in a form that explains much of our history. For instance, one of his pseudoscientific writings discusses the albino Negro and, after dismissing as unimportant the cause of pigmentation (color as such is the reality for Jefferson), repeats familiar folk tales of his time to the effect that the Negro male lusts after white women, that black women prefer relations with apes, etc. For Jefferson, black was decidedly not beautiful.[9]

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[7] Henry Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

[8] *Ibid*, p. 53.

[9] Winthrop D. Jordan, ed., *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), p. 458.

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Richard Robbins

Vivid Pictures of Bad Old Days

HARD TIMES: AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION, by Studs Terkel. New York: Random House. 462 pp. $8.95.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION, b. 1929, d. 1939 (?)—you have to think about those hard times in a context of chronology and generations. For anyone 45 and over the Depression happened too recently; the memory is still painful, we can still see the breadlines and the shantytowns, the Hoovervilles, in the mind's eye. We may be inclined to simplify a little, to say that FDR and the New Deal "saved the country," though we know well how much of the economic and social programs were palliatives, and we recognize that in the end the advent of World War II really took up the slack in the economy and blunted what was described, euphemistically, in the late thirties as "the recession." For the young, on the other hand, the Depression happened too long ago; it is remote, sealed away as history. They are variously "making it" or "rejecting the system" in their own terms. They do not wish to be scolded: "You know, when I was young and the Depression hit this family. . . ." But the Depression is simply too immense an event, too deep a rupture in American history, to be assimilated into analysis by age groups. Quite apart from the sharp memories of the middle-aged and in spite of the indifference of the young, it remains the supreme example of collapse-and-recovery in our development. After 1929, capitalism and the cluster of values which sustained it could never be the same again.

Hard Times captures this experience in a vivid and memorable way. The effect is achieved through more than 150 transcribed interviews, mostly with everyday people ranging in age from under 20 to over 80. Studs Terkel has perfected this approach over the last 25 years, in and around Chicago. Even in the late forties, when we listened to him on radio, interviewing musicians across the whole jazz-folk-blues spectrum, he had already developed great skill not only in putting questions but in relating the music to the social process, to the black ghetto, the small town, the Deep South. It was a logical next step to extend the interviews to the streets and homes of Chicago and, from there, to put the tapes into print. *Division Street: America,* which appeared in 1967, conveys the mood of urban life authentically. The people of Division Street are neither romanticized nor condescended to. They talk and remember.

Hard Times is more of the same, better realized. For here the interviews are grouped around one theme, the Depression, in its many aspects: the desperate search for work, the hard traveling to another place to make a new start, the strikes and the unions, the chaos and confusion on the farms (with crops and animals destroyed to keep prices up), the excitement and frustration of the New Deal, the surprising effort by the federal government to support hungry artists and writers (the one time, as the painter Robert Gwathmey notes, when "the most important thing was: the artist had a patron who made no aesthetic judgments"). If interest flags now and then because of too many interviews, if the sessions with "famous people"—Jim Farley, Sally Rand, Raymond Moley, Pauline Kael, and others, perhaps a tenth of the total—are largely unrewarding, the great majority of the people who speak and remember in this book bring the Depression vividly to life. Thinking about the Depression, in retrospect, they speak

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strongly, pungently, directly, above all realistically. They look back and report the way in which they and their families were shaken by what happened. Especially the minority-group people, caught behind a double wall of poverty and discrimination. Cesar Chavez remembers having gone to something like 36 elementary schools. Clifford Burke, 68, black, poor, saw nothing new: "The Negro was born in depression. . . . The Great American Depression, as you call it . . . only became official when it hit the white man." Robin Langston, 43, black, social worker and jazz musician: "I think the powers-that-be missed the boat, during the Depression. There was a kind of integration of poverty." José Yglesias tells a stirring story of the strike of the Cuban tobacco factory workers. In the Tampa factory a reader, high up on a platform, would read for four hours every day—the books were democratically chosen, Zola, Dickens, Kropotkin, along with the standard magazines. The factory owners, for no reason, tore down the lecture platform. The workers struck, but as usual "the strike was lost. Every strike in my home town was always lost." Other interviews with workers and farmers, white and Protestant, are equally arresting.

It is all there. The relief programs: people had to overcome a sense of shame that it was "their fault." The WPA: so much better, even as make-work, than relief and food stamps, yet stupidly denounced as an outrage ("leaning on a shovel") by those who still kept a little stake in the system. The sit-downs in the Detroit auto plants: a disciplined courage was required on the part of workers and organizers for the CIO which is undreamed of among those student revolutionaries who today can do no more than capture a Dean's office. The bewildering series of new programs in the first 100 days, all ticketed alphabetically—NRA, AAA, FSA, PWA: for all their defects they provided a measure of hope, a psychological as well as an economic lift. Selling apples on the street. Going broke. Taking to the road. Watching the electricity go on for the first time in a rural area: one of the best of the programs, the RRE. Watching silently, and on occasion, resisting fiercely, when the men came to foreclose the farm, evict tenants from the apartment. (In New York, on many streets, we would see the furniture piled high on the sidewalks.) It is difficult to convey the sheer *fact* of millions of unemployed in a situation where there was not yet a minimal protective system, where unemployment insurance, social security, collective bargaining, bank-deposit insurance, conservation-work camps (CCC) had to be fitted into place in the midst of all the confusion.

NOW, OF COURSE, THE REFORMS are in place and, as everyone recognizes, they are not nearly good enough for the different, even more complex crisis of the seventies. What Elizabeth Wood, a pioneer in the housing field, says about public housing then and now would apply as well to the welfare system, rural poverty, pensions for the aged, racial discrimination. "The New Deal was an enormous step. It was a leap forward. The Government assumed a responsibility toward subsidized housing. But we didn't realize the house is not enough. There's the person. In ignoring his possibilities, we have a welfare generation. We

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begot it." Some of the more dynamic, deeply aware, New Deal administrators and field agents understood the limits of what they were doing and tried to do much more. They are represented in this book by such men as "Beanie" Baldwin in the Farm Security Administration, John Beecher in the migratory labor program. On the Left, Dorothy Day, Saul Alinsky, Carey McWilliams, Max Shachtman, and others who reminisce in *Hard Times*, all saw the ways in which the New Deal fell short. But the half-success of the New Deal took the fire out of the Socialist party, while the Communists could not survive the purge in the CIO or the consequences of the Hitler-Stalin pact. On the other side, the conservative groups in the New Deal coalition prevented any real attack on the system of racial segregation. Now we are paying heavy dues.

It is plain that if a Great Depression were to recur today the extraordinary patience, fortitude, and resiliency displayed by so many of the people who speak in *Hard Times* would be much more quickly exhausted. The New Deal combined action with luck, and what could not be handled was postponed; racism and poverty had to be "rediscovered" in the sixties. But "lessons to be drawn from the Great Depression" is not Studs Terkel's text. In this big, rambling, uneven, nearly always compelling account of a terrible time, he has provided a many-sided view of people, high and low, coping with crisis. Even the young radicals, reading the story of how two black men, E. D. Nixon and A. Philip Randolph, worked against impossible odds in deepest Alabama in the thirties to organize the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, would be hard put to go on insisting "don't bug me about the Depression!"

TO CONTRIBUTORS

We strongly urge anyone submitting material to DISSENT *to keep a carbon copy. We take more than usual precautions, but the U.S. mails these days are not exactly at the peak of efficiency and we have had one or two unhappy situations in which articles were lost in the mails. So keep a copy.*

And please also be sure to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Alan Trachtenberg

A Splendid Novel

WAITING FOR THE NEWS, by Leo Litwak. New York: Doubleday. 312 pp. $5.95.

IT IS HARD to imagine a contemporary novel making life as difficult for itself, and then performing as creditably, as *Waiting for the News*. Consider: an unfashionable subject—a Jewish labor organizer in Detroit in the late 1930s fighting on two flanks against the bosses and the labor hoods—and an uncompromising theme—evil exists, pure and simple, and ought to be exterminated. Stated so boldly, both matter and theme might suggest a book regorged from the memory of proletarian sympathies and agit-prop sensibilities. But this is not the case at all. The novel is remarkable less for the more obvious daring of its choice of subject than for its treatment. And in the treatment, though Litwak's hand falters occasionally, what seems obvious and one-dimensional achieves subtlety, nuance, qualification.

This is in the end a book of our times, not the thirties. There is hardly a note of nostalgia. The novel takes exact measure of the distance between then and now; it evokes, as much by the intangible aura of its prose as anything, the space between a world where monstrous brutality lay in wait in every headline and every ring of the phone, and one—our own times—that is hardly less brutal but in which the plain fact of evil has lost its edge, its simple shuddering presence to the moral consciousness. I say this space is evoked, because in its action the novel does not get past 1943. But breathing in almost every line is the knowledge that what was unadorned violence in the life of Jake Gottlieb—father, friend, organizer of laundry-truck drivers, victim of a shot in the head and a block of concrete tied around the waist—has by now lost its power to outrage. The memory of Jake's vision of "a world to win" struggles to stay alive not only against the acts of goons, but against a society that condemns memory while it celebrates fantasies of godlike power,

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a society rich in distraction for those stationed at the outpost of events, waiting for the news.

That struggle is what the book is about. It is enacted in Jake's two sons, Ernie, the older, and Vic, the book's narrator. The sons face an obligation, an oath, a solemn pledge demanded by the morally imperious father, to avenge his murder. "Never forget you are the sons of Jake Gottlieb." The sworn oath is before the sons throughout the book, and as the action unfolds its meanings become manifold and imperative. In the case of these two adolescent boys, existence is constituted by the father in a stark and compelling way. They bear the burden not of a curse but a promise: Jake assures his continuity, and his dream's, by exacting the oath. The book can be taken as one son's discourse on the meaning of his father, on the constraints of the inheritance, and finally on the pattern of his own existence.

LITWAK COMMANDS a very sophisticated craft and he employs it in a number of ways, some too obvious, to situate the story within a context of ideas, to "point" the meanings lest they be missed. At best, in the first half of the book or so, the writing seems artless, direct, and muscular, controlled by a tone capable of subtle discriminations. Vic's voice gives the right weight to the conflicting claims of his adolescent experience: his father, gross, gauche, faintly comic, yet strong and above all *right;* the Cream of Michigan, hangout for the hoods who, with all their glamor, are enemies of the union, of reason and hope; the news from Europe, of Nazi terror and pogroms, news that, like a magic lantern, projects a background of world history for Jake's local struggles. The meaning of Jake's life and death comes to us through the pattern of Vic's awareness of the world, an awareness rich in the details of growing up in Detroit in the 1930s. The pattern itself reaches out to include the threat of Hitler at one end, and the heroic values of Homeric myth on the other. Jake's presence to his son has just such scope and intensity, and wry irony. He is Jacob, lover of God (Gottlieb), he is Maccabee, he is Atlas. Thus the book opens:

> My pa, Jake Gottlieb, had prepared himself for a great destiny. He had had in mind such models as Eugene Victor Debs, Vladimir Lenin, Judah Maccabeus. Yet in 1939 at the age of forty-seven he found himself a liege of Hyman Kravitz, whose insigne was a skeleton globe with blue longitudinal ribs and a red slash across its equator, bearing the name, "Atlas Laundry and Linen Supply Service." My pa wore the insigne on the back of his blue shirt and on his overseas cap. It spread across both sides of his truck van, accompanied by the motto, "Put your burden on our shoulders."
>
> He counted dirty sheets. He scattered roaches. He bore the burden of others on his shoulders.

The reader finds Jake situated in a world beset by trouble, by dirty sheets and roaches. And Jake is this world's antagonist. Hitler is still at some distance, but thugs like Happy Weinberg are uncomfortably near-at-hand. "He was familiar with guns, brass knuckles, knives, pipes, blackjacks, bare hands. He saw all the world's furnishings as possible weapons. He studied each man he met with the obsession of a general who must consider any terrain he enters as a potential battlefield. Men were Happy Weinberg's battlefield." Jake understood the weapons and sentiments of Mars, bore a scar to prove it, and was not beyond using them if he had to. But he served Love, and the crucial episode of the death of his amiable and foolish even if unreliable (from the union's point of view) friend, Sammy Persky, shows Jake in revulsion from his own warlike posture. He cannot forgive the crew responsible for what began as an exemplary beating of a quitter during the strike and ended as a killing. In the plot Jake's own destruction at the hands of the monsters follows directly from his prodigious capacity not to forget Sammy's killers, not to allow them an inch. Principle veers dangerously close to personal vendetta in Jake's refusal to grant a contract to O'Brien, the man who wielded the lead pipe. But that is precisely the point. Reluctantly willing to crack heads in a good cause, Jake is horrified, and his integrity threatened, when the head-splitting takes over the cause. He takes the cause personally; there is no other way.

As if to underscore Jake's stubborness as an element of his strength, the book does contain another way of taking causes. If Jake is flanked by the Happy Weinbergs and O'Briens on one side, he has Berle Dresden on the other. The "sensitive" Berle, a "love-sick poet," "a delicate man who didn't look Jewish," is Jake's intellectual adversary. The issue is joined in a

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conversation about the Nazis. Jake wants "the exterminators exterminated." Berle, the detached observer of history, disagrees. "He denied that there were monsters. All phenomena were natural and therefore available to science." He refuses to believe in devils, in "a power for evil beyond human understanding." He wants to *understand*—the classical form of transcendence, as Santayana wrote. War, anti-Semitism, gas chambers, these were all symptoms of "historical necessity," of the profit motive, of an irrational economy. The Germans were not beasts. "There was no incalculable evil. The Nazis could be explained." Logic.

" 'Don't give me logic,' " Jake snorts. He wants blood, "German blood." His speech is worth quoting in full.

> "You don't have the nerve to hit," Jake said. "You got no guts, Dresden. With me it's a different case. I let nobody—not a man, not a woman, not a child—nobody steps on me. Those who step on me will bleed. I want to see German blood. I want to see German blood flowing in German streets. After I wash in German blood I'll be clean of my shame. They degrade our people, and only when I see Germans grovel will I consider that maybe they're human. Only when they grovel will they have had the experience of Jews. Then maybe they'll understand Jews. Bleeding and groveling—that's a German education. Let them suffer what Jews suffered. Then, maybe, Dresden, I myself will no longer be a monster crying for blood. Then, maybe, German and Jew, we'll both be human. But first let them bleed."

The speech is important because it contains the contradiction of Jake's own life: he must play the monster in order to recover humanity.

THIS CONTRADICTION, roughly between ends and means, commands the entire novel, its structure, its schema of characters, its tone. In particular, the conflict between humane values and direct action to eradicate evil is the leading issue between Jake's sons. Vic, the narrator, seems closer to Jake, the truer vessel of his message. Vic feels "obliged" to his history: "Jake and I were stained by memory. History was inside our skins." Ernie, more complex, moody, brooding, needs Vic's dogged pursuit to be brought finally to his task as executioner of the evil O'Brien—whom the boys take to be responsible for Jake's murder. Ernie is drawn to abstractions, to the star-gazing of Moshe Bodkin, to the absorption "by stellar happenings." He is also drawn, unaccountably in Vic's mind, to the worldly aplomb of Leonard Mitchell, already on his way as a Cream-of-Michigan petty monster and punk. Both Moshe with his telescope and Leonard with his whores and burglaries represent ways of losing memory, evading history. Ernie "envied the brutes. . . . He wanted to become a brute so he might be spared the catastrophe we all waited for." Like Berle, he "wanted to believe that monsters were explicable," and once understood, manipulable —"a position shared both by scientist and magician."

Historical awareness, with its harsh commands for personal action, stands in this novel between science (Berle, Moshe) and magic (all the brutes). Dreams and fantasies of "almighty power" are taking shape everywhere in the world the boys grow into, in Hitler's apparent invincibility in 1939, in Gary Cooper movies and Hank Greenberg home runs. Ernie continues to play with tin soldiers in his bed, exercising the power of god over them. It is hard to resist the pull of fantasy in a time of "waiting for the news." "Still," writes Vic, "I was never deluded by such apocalyptic dreams. It was the voice of Hitler I listened to, not the voice of Chandu the magician."

The story of Jake reaches us refracted as the story of his boys and, more narrowly, as the point of view of the less troubled son, Vic. The choice to tell the story from Vic's point of view is the most consequential of Litwak's decisions in regard to structure. On the whole this works well; we have a clearer if simpler version of Jake than we would have through Ernie's eyes. But can the same be said for the story of the brothers? This feature of the book, the tensions between the boys, impresses us as the major, or at least the most ambitious intention of the novel. In the end it is less successfully rendered, less engaging, than the vigorous presence of Jake and his entourage of followers and enemies. The novel falls off noticeably toward the end, after the disappearance of Jake. Two causes seem chiefly responsible. Ernie is so much more the interesting, the sympathetic, the sensitive of the brothers, that a certain amount of his awareness always seems to escape his brother's representation. It is Ernie who finally pulls the trigger on O'Brien in a scene ruined

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by the author's laconicism (how the boys manage to get away with the killing without punishment takes an ingenious but dubious piece of fabrication by Litwak). What does the act of murder mean to Ernie? Closed off from the mind which must contemplate its own behavior, we are left unassured that the assassination passed without a ripple on the sensibility of the more morally stricken boy.

Moreover, by the end of the book the most notable aspect of Vic's narration, its archly managed tone, seems to stiffen just when it should grow more pliant, more open to complexity and implication. The tone, the style of Vic's mind, simply fails to register any change in quality of awareness. This failure, together with the emergence of a kind of response to the world rather troubling to the reader, makes one wonder if we are not in the presence of what critics call "the unreliable narrator," a voice whose judgments cannot be taken at face value but must themselves be judged.

For example: Vic often makes comments with apparent authority regarding the book's monsters. About Leonard Mitchell, early in the novel, he writes, "I don't know what occupies such heads. Maybe it's a mistake to presume that he had thoughts and feelings like our own. I have always been attracted to the monster theory. Who knows?" By the end it seems Vic does know, without doubt. Leonard is now "a man without an inner life"; men like Happy are "scarcely human," "should be rubbed out." Aren't reactions like these themselves monstrous and brutish? Perhaps that is the point, that just as Vic cannot avoid waiting for the "second coming of Jake Gottlieb," so he cannot avoid the consequences of Jake's unbending stance toward the brutish world. But if this is the point, it is occasionally expressed in a manner at odds with Jake's underlying humaneness. While steeling himself to serve as executioner of O'Brien, Vic has his first experience with sex:

> Later, I pushed her down on the sofa. She lay with her arms back. I pulled up her sweater, went under her brassiere, felt her breasts. I pulled down her pants. I had no difficulty discovering her flutter. I didn't kiss her or make vows or in any fashion betray my father's memory.

Can we read those last words without a damaging irony? But perhaps Sherry (not quite Portnoy's Monkey, but the difference is merely gymnastic) deserves what she gets, and what she doesn't get:

> That's the power of people like Sherry. They observe no landmarks. They deal with extraordinary landscapes, but their eyes superimpose the commonplace on what they see. They ignore volcanoes, earthquakes, tidal waves, artillery, and they remain joyful.

"You pay a price if you remember your fathers," Vic wrote much earlier in the book. The line is echoed shortly after by Berle: "We all got to do terrible things when we keep faith with our principles." Is Vic, finally, an object lesson of the price, of the terrible cost of waiting for Jake Gottlieb? Has he kept faith at the expense of his humanity, of Jake's larger vision of a world not only without O'Briens but of "eternal brotherhood"? Somehow, Vic's justification of the executioner as the "hero of revolution," whose act must be judged after the "moment of horror," when its goal of "a new world" is achieved, sounds hollow at best, frighteningly terroristic at worst.

Is this a case of the son's reaping the father's bitter harvest? If so, the book ends on a bitter note indeed, a note which might compel us to bring into question what asks to be unquestioned in the narrative: the absolute value of Jake. Is the murder of O'Brien an authentic enactment of Jake's value? If it is not, we need clearer grounds for certainty that Vic is to be judged as misrepresenting that value. If it is, if vengeance is the road to a better world, God help us all. It is not clear, finally, whether the unsatisfactory ending is an artistic or a moral failing. The confusion impinges on an otherwise splendid and courageous book.

The Higher Dialectic

"The most important thing we've got to convince people of about this trial" [the Black Panther trial in New Haven], Tom Hayden told the rally Saturday, "is that the facts are irrelevant."

Quoted by Ron Rosenbaum,
The Village Voice, May 7, 1970

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Henry Pachter

A Pre-Leninist Theory of American Imperialism

THE ROOTS OF THE MODERN AMERICAN EMPIRE: A STUDY OF THE GROWTH AND SHAPING OF SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN A MARKETPLACE SOCIETY, by William Appleman Williams. New York: Random House. 544 pp. $15.

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT and, in a way, a moving book. Professor Williams is well-known as the author of three hard-hitting works: *The Shaping of American Diplomacy, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy,* and *The Contours of American History,* which defined and attacked American imperialism. He is also a socialist who has angered Marxist orthodoxy by his essay *The Great Evasion: On the Contemporary Relevance of Karl Marx.* His roots, as he says, are in the agrarian West, and his vision of the good society emanates from the Christian conceptions of a soil-bound communalism. He has provided this book, which summarizes the studies and struggles of a lifetime, with a prologue and an epilogue, honest and reflective, defining his present position vis-à-vis both the Establishment and the New Left.

As to American capitalism, he has become more pessimistic than before. He now thinks that imperialism is inherent in the character of a marketplace economy and in its conceptions of reality; hence capitalism is incapable of realizing even that freedom that is essential to its functioning. No meaningful freedom can survive in a mass democracy. As to the New Left, alas, it only reproduces, involuntarily and unknowingly but therefore even more menacingly, the very modes of its environment.

In his new book Professor Williams has written the story of good men and women who embraced expansionism in the name of freedom, agrarian reformers and populist agitators who thought they were bringing the good society to all mankind but only achieved a policy, a movement and an ideology which actually launched the United States on its way to Vietnam. This story ties in with Williams's earlier efforts to show that American imperialism and notably the Cold War started with the policy of the "Open Door" in China and elsewhere. The present book covers the period from the beginning of the 19th century and leads up to the "closing of the frontier" in 1893, the Spanish-American War of 1898, and America's participation in the Boxer intervention. Its action precedes that of the earlier book and in some respects corrects its thesis; for the motivations that before the turn of the century drove the American farmer toward expansionism were slightly different from those that afterwards animated the American businessman. Should the gods grant Professor Williams another book in which he might trace American imperialism back to the Founding Fathers, we can be sure that he would discover still another layer of social forces, political interests and ideologies which also contributed to the singular syndrome of the American "mission."

This leads us to the first word of criticism. There is not any one "root" of a national behavior pattern; there is a history that at various times elicits various responses, each of which may leave a layer of tradition, habit, and ideology in the public consciousness. The anti-colonialism of the young republic colored its political expressions for over a hundred years: animosity against the world power of the Pound Sterling still rings in the 1890s' manifestos. The farm crisis that produced the export drive of the eighties added another factor to the expansionist fantasies which this volume so well documents. Protectionist and financial lobbies early in this century gave American imperialism a third dimension, closer to Hobson's and Lenin's interpretation. Finally, we now have an American empire-consciousness determined by both its antagonism to another giant power and its need to retain mastery in its own orbit. The present situation is so unique that the effort to reduce it to hundred-year-old "roots" hardly helps our understanding. Yet it is Professor Williams's contention that to understand the U.S. presence in Vietnam we must go back to the mold in which it was shaped—namely, the Adam Smithian idea of a market economy intimately linked up with the Lockean idea of individual liberty. It is this market economy which is unsatisfactory; it prevents us from

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living content on our own soil and orders us to go out into the world in search of more land and new markets. This first explains the idea of Manifest Destiny, the conquest of the continent, the wiping out of its aborigines; but then, when the last frontier has been reached, the impulse to sell directs our sights across the ocean. Though we did not conquer many overseas colonies, we did reduce overseas countries to the status of semicolonies—buyers of our surplus, providers of raw materials, opportunities for investment. To assure a favorable environment for American business we had to "open the doors" everywhere and to convert every nation to our ideal of a market economy.

This may sound familiar to readers of the *Communist Manifesto:* "Capital in its mad hunt for profit has brought modern industrial civilization to all nations and has revolutionized every obsolete mode of production," etc. But Williams sees this process not in terms of the progress it has wrought in history (he does not believe in Hegelian dialectics); he chalks up what it has done to the Chinese and to us. It has made us into imperialists who impose our idea of a market society on others. This is the original sin of capitalism, and we are unable to live it down or get rid of it. Marx would have classified Williams among the romantic, nostalgic hankerers after Paradise whom he contemptuously called "utopian" or German socialists.

THE ORIGINALITY OF WILLIAMS'S CONTRIBUTION is in the proof, which fills the bulk of his book, that expansionism was not promoted by big business, still less by monopoly capitalism as Lenin and his followers would have it, but by the American farmers, whom he never fails to call "agricultural businessmen." The evil was wrought *in* Paradise, and even before the doors of Paradise were closed in 1893. Williams shows how in every administration the farmers' expansionist policies defeated the more parochial interests of business.

This is a fascinating story, which we have no space to repeat here. It flies in the face of everything the "new history" of Robinson and Beard had taught at the beginning of this century. Suffice it to mention the last leg of Williams's arduous voyage: the clamor for war against Spain. Williams cites all the voices of populists and agrarians who importuned the President to go to war, and he assures us that these spokesmen expected to "open" the Cuban market for U.S. farm products. But what the hell did they expect to sell to the Cubans? He can quote some silly fantasies to the effect that the conquest of the Philippines would open the great Chinese market; but he fails to give any figures on the true size of that market, and he is right; for despite the "opening" there were no sales.

The relationship between agrarianism and nationalism is not economic, as a look at European history will make clear. The German peasant who fought Bismarck's wars or the French peasant who voted for Napoleon had nothing to sell in the world market. Even the American farmer up to 1914 never sold more than 14 percent of his products abroad. To link their intense nationalism up with a supposed "market ideology" and to marry the two to produce "imperialism" is a fantasy. Imperialism, as the name says, implies command, mastery. All that the American "farm businessman" wanted was a chance to sell. Professor Williams never seems to have graduated from mercantilism to Adam Smith, and his entire book is an attack on the consequences of laissez faire, the international division of labor, and the economics of foreign exchanges. In reality, the American farmers were free traders and hoped to get a fair price for their product in exchange for their willingness to buy goods manufactured abroad. As free traders and allies of the British Anti-Corn-Law League, they had no intention of monopolizing or of fencing in any market; on the contrary, they fought against protectionists at home and abroad who exploited their weaknesses. The enemies were the City of London—British imperialism—and its allies in the Yankee cities. Down to World War I, when many things changed, the American farmer felt himself to be exploited by the world market and victimized by domestic as well as foreign colonialism, rather than a beneficiary of the "market mentality."

Just as Williams is short on economic theory, so he provides no statistical information to back up his conception. We are handed a few figures on the phenomenal percentage growth of agricultural exports but are never told

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what part of total farm output they amounted to. For the peak three years alone (1875–77) we are told farm exports were 7 percent of GNP—not really impressive as a cause for imperialism. To establish his case, Williams ought to give us not gross comparisons over decades but precise analyses of the ups and downs in specific strategic commodities which might explain sudden spurts of export promotion and frantic search for markets.

In some cases, the information he gives is mistaken. Thus, dubbing "protectionist" the European efforts to keep diseased animals from being imported, he finds it "highly questionable whether American meat was more diseased than the European product." But it is a fact that European governments required inspection in domestic slaughterhouses, whereas even today the American consumer is not protected against trichinosis. Speaking of the plan to warehouse surplus products—then as under the New Deal intended to provide the farmer with short-term credit at harvest time—he approvingly cites the argument that this would permit America to manipulate the world markets or make it the marketplace of the world. It is clear that agrarians then used such arguments because they dared not say that the scheme was to keep the domestic price high and to protect the farmers from bankers and speculators. If anything, the American farmer always tried to escape the pernicious mechanism of the market.

These examples may suffice to show that Williams, for all his industry and scholarship, does not make proper use of his sources. If one scans provincial newspapers and private correspondence, he is likely to come across enough quotations to fill a book and prove any thesis. Since in the nineties the imperialist ideology spread through the whole continent and indeed through all of the Western world, it is no wonder that instances of it can also be found in farm journals.

"For instance" is not proof; even less so when the "instance" is out of context or the quotation misleading. When Secretary of State Sherman warned that "our foreign policy must be controlled by commercial interest," he meant to oppose the populist clamor for intervention in Cuba; the "commercial interest" —namely flour mills—hoped to continue doing business with the Spanish Crown (as today with established dictators) and considered the rebels responsible for insecurity and loss of sales. This episode, by the way, is a good example for the pitfalls of exemplifying from history: whether we support or subvert the status quo, whether we intervene or whether we don't, in each case the "instance" proves commercial imperialism. Without any doubt, the decrepit Spanish monarchy was less able to resist American economic penetration than Cuban patriots, and the American farmers' enthusiasm for the rebel cause might just be a case of international solidarity for like-minded people—revolutionary imperialism.

Williams, on the contrary, attributes to the populists the foresight of a Machiavellian gambit: they were really after the Chinese market and therefore wanted the Philippines; but to get there they had to wax enthusiastically about Cuba in order to provoke war with Spain. As usual, the scheme can be exposed by quotations, notably from "letters to the editor." I submit this is a mistake of scholarship. (Williams's comrade-in-arms, D. F. Fleming, makes an even wider use of this malpractice. The historian wants to know what and who influenced the policy-maker. For a model the reader is referred to Ernest R. May's studies of American imperialism.)

More doubtful even than his use of available quotations is Williams's use of quotations that are not there. Of the annexation of Hawaii he says that the continental farmers wanted to include the islands in their "free marketplace system"—for what? To let the pineapples into the American customs system? When Cleveland tried to restore Liliuokalani, Williams interprets the populist outburst over this as a defense of the principle of the marketplace. After that Williams never fails to add, to the recitation of any event or utterance, the magic words, "to facilitate the expansion of the marketplace." This can easily be "proven" by writing history selectively—leaving out what does not fit.

Most of the great political decisions he describes in the bulk of the book do concern the economic interests of farmers—especially their export opportunities: a deal with Germany on pork, the securing of outlets to the sea

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either down the Mississippi or by building railroads, the silver issue, repeated slumps, etc. On all these issues a farm lobby would legitimately express its views; representatives of the farm states in Congress would exert pressure, whether to obtain specific measures or to stamp their general economic philosophy on government policies. But the mere fact of wanting to create markets abroad does not constitute imperialism. The indictment that the farmers' market orientation was the "root" of American imperialism can stand up only in the mind of one who considers trading and economic exchange sinful in themselves.

As most of us are tempted to do, Williams seeks to shape his views on world affairs in the mold of his socialist convictions. He seems to think that there must be one common root for both the social evils of American capitalism and the international horrors committed by American imperialists. He finds them both in the "market mentality." It is to be noted that he does not blame *direct* economic advantage for specific foreign policy moves, but a state of mind that itself is economically conditioned. This certainly makes more sense than the orthodox Marxist-Leninist theory which puts the blame on the capitalists as a class, or the pseudo-Marxist theory of the New Left which singles out specific capitalists and their illegitimate influence. But, once you are dealing with states of mind rather than ascertainable facts, all states of mind have equal standing and it becomes very hard to prove that the "market mentality" rather than "anti-British parochialism" or a Schumpeter-type "power madness" was the fount of expansionist impulses. Nor can we exclude the hypothesis that expansion, the search for more land, was a reaction *against* the market reality, a flight *from* the tentacles of capitalism—a hypothesis for which there are quotations available from Jefferson to Greeley. In fact, what is imperialism but nationalism on a world scale? And what is nationalism but tribalism writ large?

Imperialism is the search for new frontiers—a notion on which Williams relies heavily. But we must keep in mind that "frontiers" can be expanded not only horizontally but in depth, too. A population can find *Lebensraum* abroad, or it can use the available land more intensively. It can conquer more land or create new industries. Any imperialism that was built upon the old rural notion of land as the only source of happiness is dated; it has long since been replaced by other imperatives. But if the imperialist mentality outlived—as, incidentally, it had preceded—the "agricultural businessman," then we are compelled, unfortunately, to assume other, psychological and perhaps anthropological factors favoring expansionism or the search for dominium as an outlet for social energies. Paradoxically, such an assumption gives us more hope than Professor Williams's gloomy economic determinism. If his one-dimensional view is right, America is bound to continue her imperial career. If, on the other hand, multiple causes and historical variations have fed the imperialist mentality, then civilization may still learn to turn off some of these spigots of destruction.

Though Professor Williams is no Marxist, he has fallen into the trap of an economic determinism which lands him in inevitable doom. He who tries to write history by scanning balance sheets will always end up with unsolved equations. Of the Civil War he writes: "[It] came over the extension of slavery, not over its abolition, and that issue was defined and joined by market-minded agriculturists rather than by crusaders." The first part of the sentence is indubitably true according to the strictest reading of the documents; the second part makes it false. He could just as well say that the movement against the Vietnam war was defined and joined by people who feared the draft rather than by general revulsion from futile, illegal, and immoral sacrifice. In each case the interested parties would not have joined the issue had not the crusaders defined and sharpened it for them. No fight against extension of slavery could have been possible without abolitionism. Likewise, no imperialism would have been possible without a consciousness that was nourished by images deeper than economic interest could suggest. It is precisely this ideological need of imperialism, or of any political movement for that matter, to justify itself in terms of human civilization—it is this ultimate dependence of the sword upon the pen that gives us hope for a future beyond Empire.

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LETTERS

A Point of Difference

Editor:

Gordon Haskell's article in the March–April 1970 issue of DISSENT, entitled "Civil Liberties: To Hell in a Basket?," is incorrect in a very important respect.

After correctly pointing out that the ACLU sought to have the indictments against the Chicago Eight dismissed on the ground that the Interstate Riot Act was unconstitutional, he goes on to say: "Having been denied their motions, the ACLU was told by the defendants that they preferred their own lawyers so that they would be free to conduct their defense in their own way. From that moment on, the trial had been a kind of guerrilla theater in a courtroom setting."

The first error is the implication that the defendants were being represented by ACLU attorneys who were dismissed. Not a shred of truth in that. The defendants from the very beginning were represented by their own non-ACLU attorneys. The only ACLU involvement up to that point was an amicus curiae brief which it filed in support of a motion filed by the defendants' own attorneys to dismiss the indictments because of the unconstitutionality of the statute.

Second, Haskell tries to leave the implication that, if the defendants had not dismissed their nonexistent ACLU lawyers, the trial would not have become "a kind of guerrilla theater in a courtroom setting." The implication there is that, one, the trial was in fact a kind of guerrilla theater and, two, that it was a guerrilla theater because of the defendants' lawyers. I disagree with both implications. The only reason the trial became a "kind of guerrilla theater" is because of the way it was tried by Judge Julius Hoffman. He was the producer, director, writer, and chief actor.

Mr. Haskell's factual errors are the more surprising because if he walked down the hall from his office to mine, he could have learned the accurate facts. Easier yet, he might have read the ACLU's own news stories concerning its limited involvement as amicus curiae in the Chicago trial.

MELVIN L. WULF, Legal Director
American Civil Liberties Union

GORDON HASKELL *replies:*

The point I was trying to make in the paragraph quoted by my colleague, Mel Wulf, was that the defendants in the Chicago 7 trial chose their own counsel, and that ACLU's direct involvement in the case preceded the point at which the trial became guerrilla theater. The point was made because I have encountered relatively knowledgeable people who either thought ACLU *was* representing the defendants (William Kunstler is a member of ACLU's Board of Directors); or felt that ACLU had, in some way, "copped out" because it was *not* representing them.

I didn't say ACLU's lawyers were "dismissed," and Mr. Wulf is quite right, they were never retained. One might, however, wonder why? ACLU's services are free of charge; the organization has excellent lawyers both on its staff and as volunteers; they are not inexpert in the areas covered by the trial; the Union has a certain prestige which might have helped the defendants.

But would ACLU counsel have identified themselves with the *politics* of the defendants as Kunstler did, and express that identification by their conduct of the trial?

After Mr. Wulf's quotation my article attacked the police agents, the conduct of the judge, the government's motives in pressing the prosecution, the police riot which led to it all, and only then got around to the defendants and their counsel. To Mr. Wulf, that's saying it was all "because of the defendants' lawyers."

Perhaps I didn't go down the hall to get my facts straight because the facts don't always look the same at both ends of the corridor.

GORDON HASKELL
American Civil Liberties Union

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